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Second Lieutenant Rama Raghoba Rane

Writer: Anupam Arunachalam **Artist:** Zoheb Akbar

Naik Yadunath Singh

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Company Havildar Major Piru Singh Shekhawat

Writer: Sahil Rizwan **Artist:** Rakesh C.S.

Captain Gurbachan Singh Salaria

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Major Dhan Singh Thapa

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Subedar Joginder Singh

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Writer: Prabha Nair **Artist:** Rakesh C.S.

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Flying Officer Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon

Writer: Aparna Kapur **Artist:** Arijit Dutta Chowdhury

Second Lieutenant Arun Khetarpal

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Major Hoshiar Singh

Writer: Sahil Rizwan **Artist:** Sundarlal

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Writer: Aparna Kapur **Artist:** Harsho Mohan Chatteraj

Major Ramaswamy Parameswaran

Writer: Aparna Kapur **Artist:** Sundara Moorthy

Captain Manoj Kumar Pandey

Writer: Prabha Nair **Artist:** Harsho Mohan Chatteraj

Grenadier Yogendra Singh Yadav

Writer: Sahil Rizwan **Artist:** Zoheb Akbar

Rifleman Sanjay Kumar

Writer: Sanjana Kapur **Artist:** Mrinal Roy

Captain Vikram Batra

Writer: Sanjana Kapur **Artist:** Durgesh Velhal

Story and Research: Vaneeta Vaid

Colourists: C. Ramesh, Prakash S., Silambarasan K.,
Raghavendra Kamath, Ritoparna Hazra, Adarsh Achari

Layout: Sivajiith S., Aparna Kapur

Cover: Arijit Dutta Chowdhury, Ghanshyam Bochgeri

Art Director: Savio Mascarenhas

Editor: Reena Ittyerah Puri

MAJOR SOMNATH SHARMA

THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A LACK OF PATRIOTS IN OUR COUNTRY. THE INDIAN ARMED FORCES ARE FILLED WITH STIRRING STORIES OF COURAGEOUS MEN, WHO DISPLAYED UNQUESTIONING LOYALTY TO THE NATION. OUR FIRST STORY IS OF ONE SUCH INDIVIDUAL AND IT BEGINS IN THE EARLY 1930S WITH LITTLE SOM.



SOMNATH WAS FROM A FAMILY OF ARMY OFFICERS. HIS FATHER, AMAR NATH SHARMA, WENT ON TO BECOME A GENERAL IN THE ARMY.

*INDIAN CIVIL SERVICES

AT THE AGE OF TEN, SOMNATH'S PARENTS TOOK HIM TO MEET MAJOR GENERAL BRUCE HEY, THE DISTRICT COMMANDER OF LUCKNOW.



SOMNATH WAS HOPING TO GET INTO THE PRINCE OF WALES MILITARY COLLEGE* IN DEHRADUN.

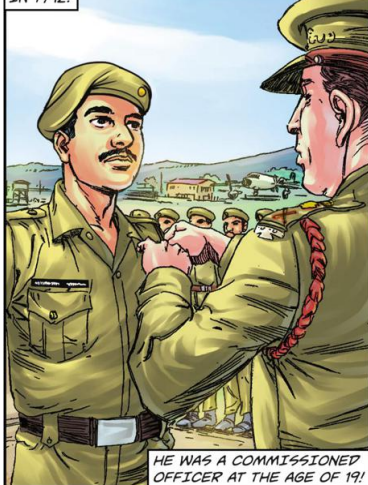
*PRINCE OF WALES MILITARY COLLEGE WAS LATER RENAMED RASHTRIYA INDIAN MILITARY COLLEGE (R.I.M.C.).

SOMNATH'S CONFIDENCE IMPRESSED THE MAJOR GENERAL AND HE WAS INDUCTED INTO THE MILITARY COLLEGE IMMEDIATELY.



HIS ARMY TRAINING BEGAN AT THE AGE OF TEN!

AFTER R.I.M.C., SOMNATH JOINED THE INDIAN MILITARY ACADEMY. HE PASSED OUT OF I.M.A. IN 1942.



HE WAS A COMMISSIONED OFFICER AT THE AGE OF 19!

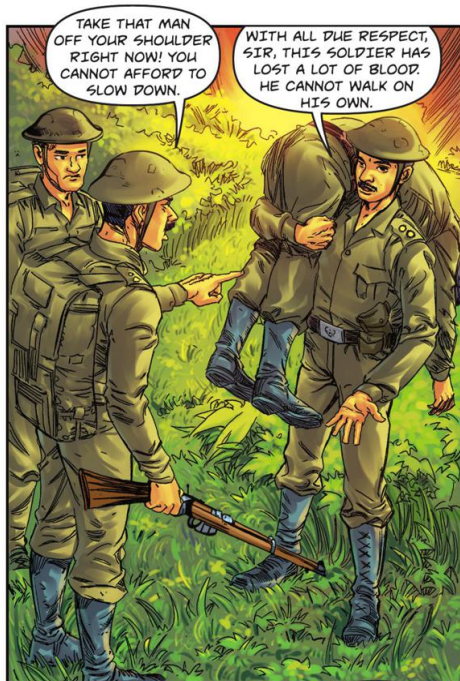
DURING THE BURMA* CAMPAIGN IN WORLD WAR II -



BAHADUR!
COME ON, GET UP!
WE AREN'T LEAVING
YOU BEHIND.

NO, SOMI
SA'AB, YOU
SHOULD CARRY
ON WITHOUT
ME.

*BURMA IS NOW MYANMAR.



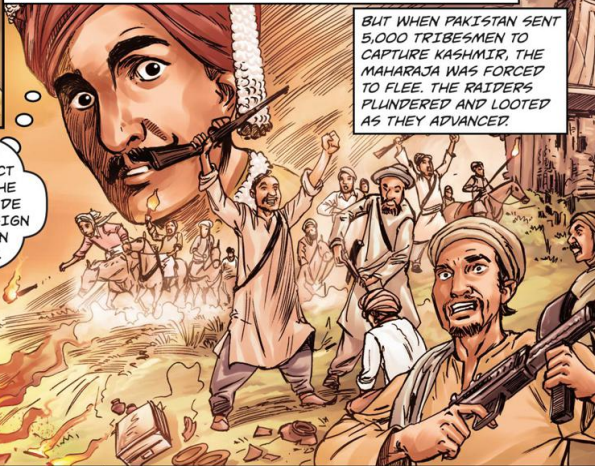
AT THAT TIME, MAJOR SOMNATH SHARMA WAS PART OF THE 4 KUMAON BATTALION. HE WAS DELTA COMPANY'S COMMANDER.



EVEN THOUGH INDIA HAD JUST WON HER INDEPENDENCE, THINGS HAD NOT SETTLED IN THE COUNTRY.



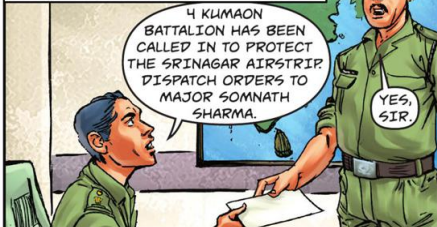
THERE WAS UNREST IN KASHMIR. THE MAHARAJA OF KASHMIR, HARI SINGH, HAD NOT MADE HIS DECISION TO JOIN INDIA YET.



BUT WHEN PAKISTAN SENT 5,000 TRIBESMEN TO CAPTURE KASHMIR, THE MAHARAJA WAS FORCED TO FLEE. THE RAIDERS PLUNDERED AND LOOTED AS THEY ADVANCED.

THE ONLY HOPE I HAVE TO PROTECT KASHMIR FROM THE RAIDERS IS TO SIDE WITH INDIA, AND SIGN THE DECLARATION OF ACCESSION*.

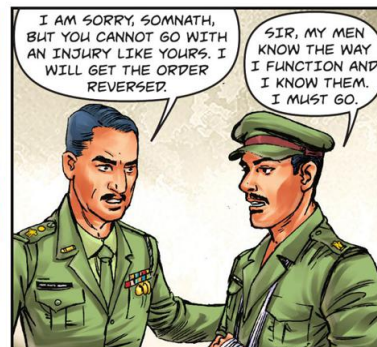
INDIA IMMEDIATELY GAVE ORDERS TO WARD OFF THE RAIDERS. 4 KUMAON BATTALION WAS AMONG THE UNITS THAT WERE TO MOVE TO SRINAGAR.



4 KUMAON BATTALION HAS BEEN CALLED IN TO PROTECT THE SRINAGAR AIRSTRIP. DISPATCH ORDERS TO MAJOR SOMNATH SHARMA.

YES, SIR.

THE BATTALION HAD BEEN LOOKING AFTER INTERNAL SECURITY AT THE TIME. THE OTHER COMPANIES WERE DEPLOYED AT HISSAR, GURGAON AND ROHTAK AREAS.



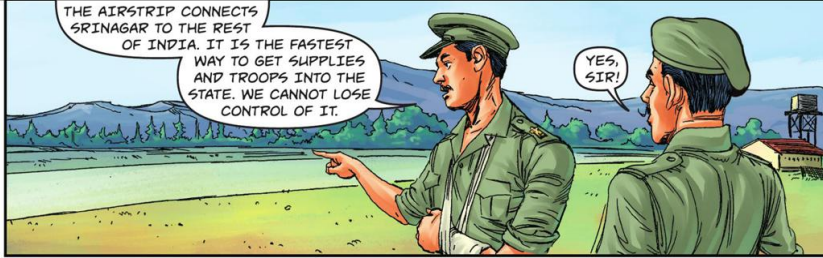
I AM SORRY, SOMNATH, BUT YOU CANNOT GO WITH AN INJURY LIKE YOURS. I WILL GET THE ORDER REVERSED.

SIR, MY MEN KNOW THE WAY I FUNCTION AND I KNOW THEM. I MUST GO.

*SUB-UNIT OF A REGIMENT, CONSISTING OF 140-150 SOLDIERS

*A LEGAL DOCUMENT CREATED IN 1947 TO ENABLE EACH OF THE RULERS OF THE PRINCELY STATES TO JOIN ONE OF THE NEW NATIONS OF INDIA OR PAKISTAN

ON 31 OCTOBER, MAJOR SOMNATH SHARMA, ALONG WITH 70 MEN OF THE DELTA COMPANY, ARRIVED IN SRINAGAR.



ON 2 NOVEMBER, MAJOR SOMNATH'S COMPANY WAS JOINED BY COMPANY A (ALPHA), HEADED BY CAPTAIN H.S. BOLINA.

WE HAVE INFORMATION THAT THERE IS A LARGE GROUP OF RAIDERS MOVING IN OVER THESE HILLS.



THE NEXT DAY, TWO COMPANIES HEADED BY MAJOR SOMNATH, ALONG WITH A COMPANY UNDER CAPTAIN RONNIE WOOD FROM 1 KUMAON, WERE SENT TO SURVEY BADGAM.



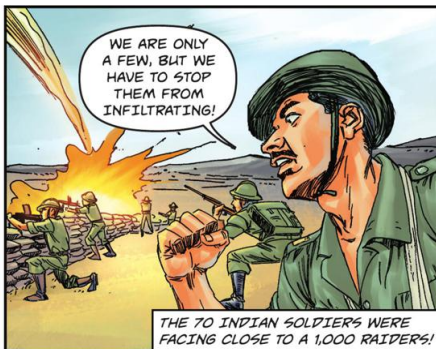
AFTER A WHILE -



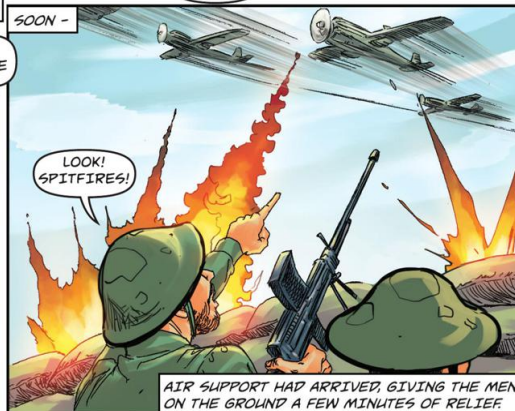
AT AROUND 1430 HRS, THE KASHMIRI REFUGEES STARTED LEAVING -

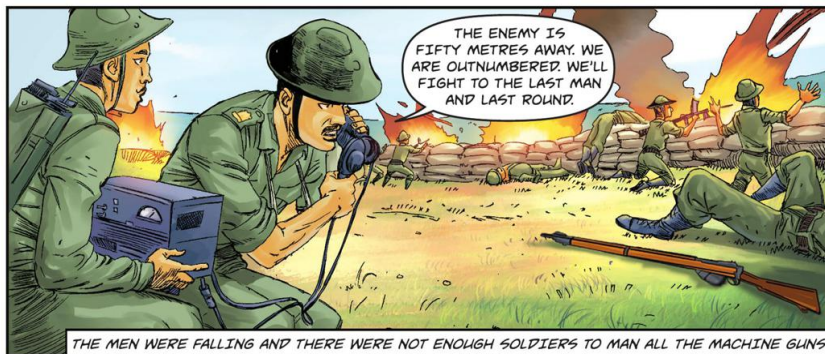
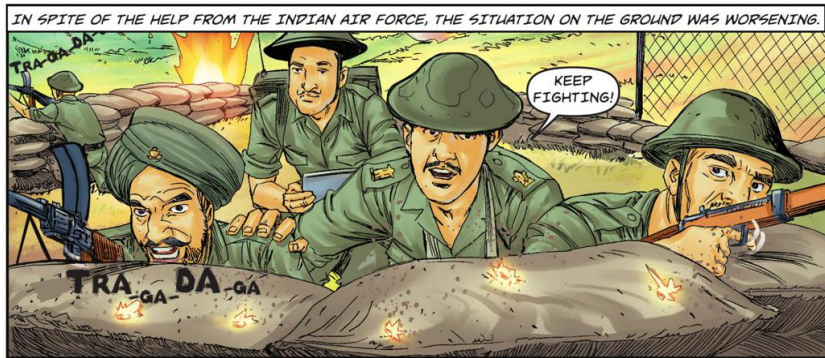


*A STREAM OR A NARROW RIVER

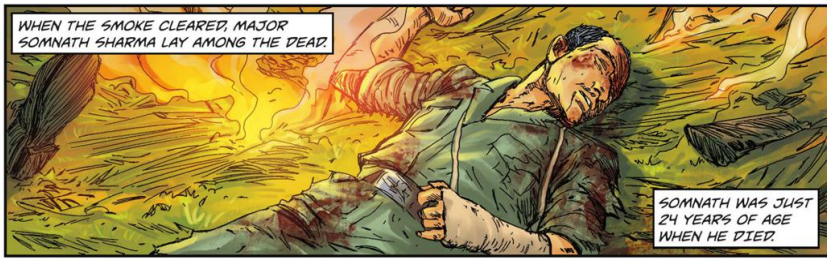
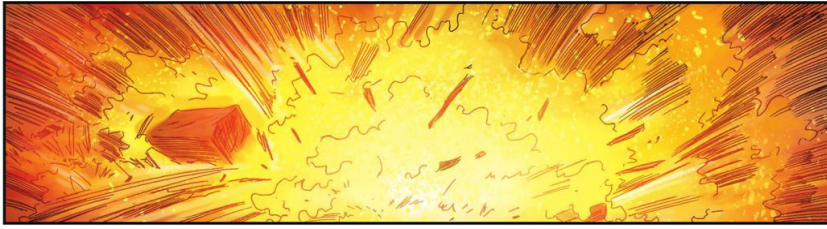
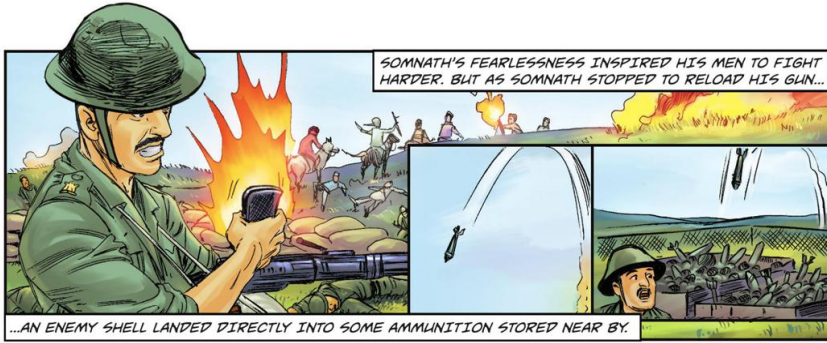


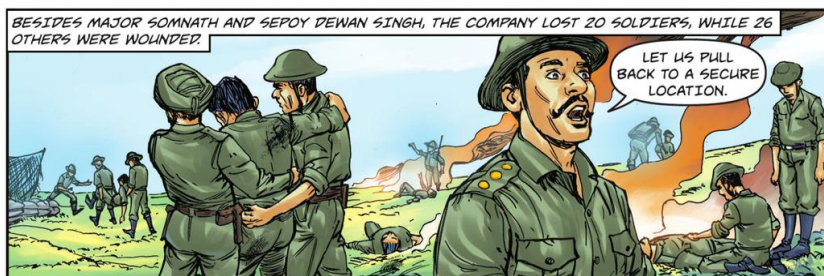
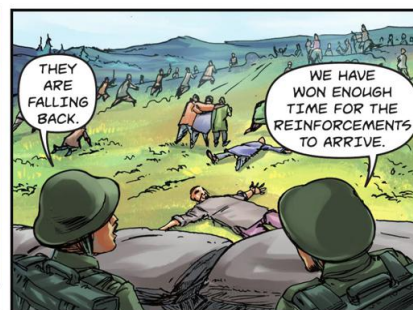
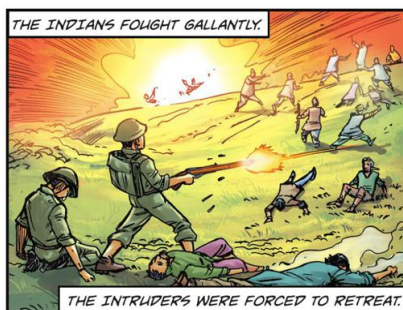
WITH FIGHTER PLANES ON THEIR WAY -





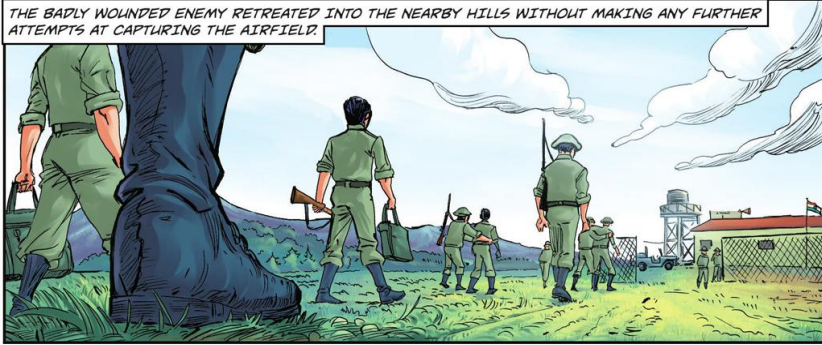
*A CHAMBER THAT CONTAINS BULLETS AND CAN BE LOADED INTO A GUN





*SEPOY DEWAN SINGH WAS AWARDED THE MAHAVIR CHAKRA FOR HIS ROLE IN THE BATTLE OF BADGAM.

THE BADLY WOUNDED ENEMY RETREATED INTO THE NEARBY HILLS WITHOUT MAKING ANY FURTHER ATTEMPTS AT CAPTURING THE AIRFIELD.



THE BATTLE AT BADGAM STRENGTHENED INDIA'S POSITION IN KASHMIR.



THE ENEMY HAS BEEN DEFEATED AND THE AIRFIELD IS NOW SECURE.

BY HOLDING THEIR GROUND, MAJOR SOMNATH SHARMA AND HIS BAND OF BRAVE MEN SECURED SRINAGAR AND PREVENTED PAKISTAN FROM TAKING OVER KASHMIR.



MAJOR SOMNATH WAS THE FIRST PERSON TO BE AWARDED THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA, INDIA'S HIGHEST GALLANTRY AWARD.

LANCE NAIK KARAM SINGH



KARAM SINGH WAS THE SON OF A WEALTHY FARMER, SARDAR UTTAM SINGH. HE GREW UP IN THE VILLAGE OF SENHA NEAR SANGRUR IN PUNJAB, LEARNING HOW TO PLOUGH AND SOW SEEDS.



KARAM WORKED TOWARDS HIS GOAL. ON 15 SEPTEMBER, 1941, HE WAS INDUCTED INTO THE SIKH REGIMENT AT MEERUT CANTONMENT AS A SEPOY...



...AND THEN POSTED TO 1 SIKH REGIMENT IN THE NORTH-EASTERN FRONTIER PROVINCE*.

IN 1944, WHEN WORLD WAR II WAS AT ITS PEAK -



OUR UNIT HAS BEEN ORDERED TO THE WAR ZONE. WE LEAVE TOMORROW MORNING.

THE UNIT WAS HEADED TO THE INDO-BURMA BORDER.



I HAVE NEVER SEEN SUCH GREENERY IN MY LIFE. IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL.

WE HAVE TO MOVE ON FOOT FROM THIS POINT. MOVE AHEAD CAREFULLY, THE GROUND IS UNFAMILIAR AND DANGEROUS. THESE JUNGLES ARE VERY THICK AND TREACHEROUS.

*NOW ARUNACHAL PRADESH

THE PATH WAS INDEED FRAUGHT WITH DANGERS THAT THE SOLDIERS HAD NEVER ENCOUNTERED.



A GIANT SNAKE!



TWO BLOOD-SUCKING LEECHES FEASTING OFF ME!



WHAT IS THAT CREATURE?

NEVER SEEN A SCORPION BEFORE? JUST STAY AWAY. IT IS LETHAL.



I HAVE NEVER SWEATED LIKE THIS!

YOU ARE RIGHT! DEALING WITH THE HUMIDITY IS WORSE THAN FACING THE ENEMY.

THE IMPERIAL JAPANESE ARMY, ALONG WITH THAI FORCES AND BURMESE INSURGENTS, HAD DRIVEN THE BRITISH FORCES OUT OF BURMA.



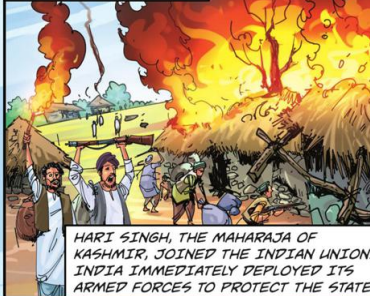
THE INDIAN SOLDIERS FOUGHT BRAVELY DESPITE MANY OF THEM BEING AFFECTED BY TROPICAL AILMENTS LIKE MALARIA, DYSENTERY AND FEVER.

KARAM SINGH PROVED HIS WORTH IN THE WAR...



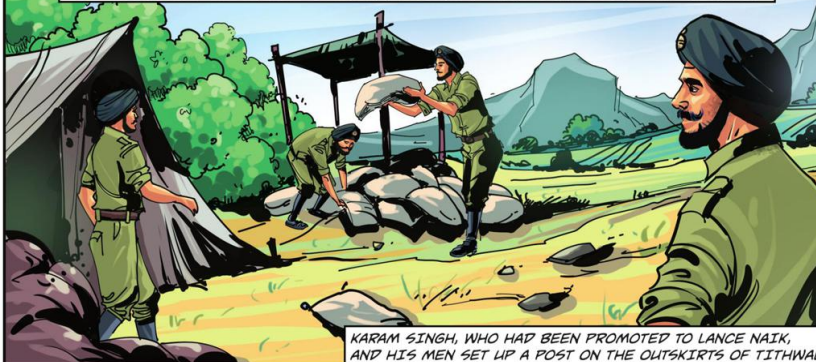
...AND WAS AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL* FOR HIS CONTRIBUTION.

IN JANUARY, 1948, FOUR MONTHS AFTER INDIA HAD WON HER FREEDOM, PAKISTAN LAUNCHED AN ATTACK ON KASHMIR*.



HARI SINGH, THE MAHARAJA OF KASHMIR, JOINED THE INDIAN UNION. INDIA IMMEDIATELY DEPLOYED ITS ARMED FORCES TO PROTECT THE STATE.

THE SIKH REGIMENT WAS MOVED TO SRINAGAR. THEY WERE TASKED WITH CAPTURING AND THEN DEFENDING THE TOWN OF TITHWAL, WHICH WAS A FEW KILOMETRES FROM SRINAGAR.



KARAM SINGH, WHO HAD BEEN PROMOTED TO LANCE NAIK, AND HIS MEN SET UP A POST ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TITHWAL.

*A MILITARY DECORATION AWARDED TO PERSONNEL OF THE BRITISH ARMY FOR BRAVERY

*BEFORE THE DECLARATION OF ACCESSION WITH INDIA, KASHMIR WAS AN INDEPENDENT STATE.

ON 13 OCTOBER, 1948, THE PAKISTANI RAIDERS LAUNCHED A MASSIVE ATTACK ON ALPHA COMPANY OF 1 SIKH REGIMENT IN THE TITHWAL AREA.

KARAM SINGH'S POST WAS THE FIRST TO BE ATTACKED.

TAKE POSITIONS!

WE ARE HEAVILY OUTNUMBERED!

THEIR FIRING IS VERY ACCURATE. WE HAVE LOST MANY OF OUR BUNKERS.

KARAM SINGH TOOK CHARGE.

MOVE TO THE RIGHT AND CLEAR THE AREA!



KARAM SINGH AND HIS MEN STOOD THEIR GROUND. THE RAIDERS RETREATED BUT ONLY FOR A SHORT TIME.



THE ENEMY HAS LAUNCHED ANOTHER ATTACK!

HOLD YOUR POSITION AND FIRE BACK.

WE CAN'T KEEP THIS POSITION FOR TOO LONG. LET'S HEAD TO THE MAIN POSITION.

OUR AMMUNITION IS DEPLETING RAPIDLY.

YOU ARE INJURED, LET ME CARRY HIM.

IT'S NOT TOO FAR. YOU HELP THE OTHERS ALONG THE WAY.

DESPITE BEING INJURED, KARAM NOT ONLY HELPED HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS MAKE THEIR WAY BACK TO THE MAIN POSITION, HE ALSO KEPT THE ENEMY AT BAY WITH GRENADES.

AT THE MAIN POSITION, THE BATTLE HAD ALREADY BEGUN. KARAM JOINED THE SECTION CLOSEST TO THE ENEMY.

THE TRENCHES AND BUNKERS HAVE CAVED IN!

LET'S FOCUS ON HOLDING OFF THE ATTACK. I'LL GET THE WOUNDED OUT.

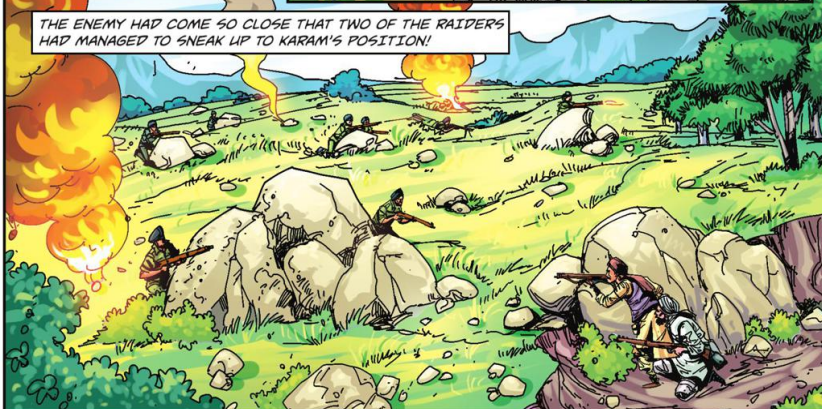


KARAM SINGH WAS UNSTOPPABLE. DESPITE THE HEAVY FIRING, HE SHOT DOWN ANY ADVANCING RAIDER AND CONTINUED EVACUATING THE INJURED.

BY 1300 HRS, THE RAIDERS HAD PUT IN A FIFTH ATTACK!



THE ENEMY HAD COME SO CLOSE THAT TWO OF THE RAIDERS HAD MANAGED TO SNEAK UP TO KARAM'S POSITION!



BUT KARAM SINGH HAD SEEN THEM APPROACH AND -



KARAM WAS BACK TO HIS POSITION BEFORE ANYONE REALISED WHAT HAD HAPPENED.



THE ENEMY ATTEMPTED TWO MORE ATTACKS WHICH WERE UNSUCCESSFUL.



WHEN THE BATTLE BROKE OFF AROUND 1900 HRS, THE PAKISTANI RAIDERS HAD FIRED AROUND 3000 SHELLS!

BUT THE INDIAN ARMY HAD STOOD ITS GROUND AND PUSHED THROUGH WITH GRIT.



THE ENEMY IS RETREATING. TITHVAL HAS BEEN SECURED!

LANCE NAIK KARAM SINGH HAD DOMINATED THE BATTLEFIELD AND MADE HIS COUNTRY PROUD.

LANCE NAIK KARAM SINGH WAS AWARDED THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA BY INDIA'S FIRST PRESIDENT, DR RAJENDRA PRASAD.



HE WAS THE FIRST NON-POSTHUMOUS PERSON TO WIN THE AWARD.

KARAM SINGH RETIRED FROM THE INDIAN ARMY AS SUBEDAR AND HONORARY CAPTAIN IN 1967.



2/LT RAMA RAGHOBHA RANE

THE YEAR WAS 1940, AND WORLD WAR II WAS AT ITS PEAK. RAMA RAGHOBHA RANE HAD JUST MADE UP HIS MIND ABOUT WHAT HE WAS GOING TO DO WITH THE REST OF HIS LIFE.



WHEN RAMA'S FATHER HEARD ABOUT HIS DECISION -



AND SO, RAMA RAGHOBA RANE ENLISTED IN THE ARMY.



RAMA TRAINED HARD



HIS EFFORTS DID NOT GO UNRECOGNISED. AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY, HE WAS AWARDED THE COMMANDANT'S CANE**.



*'FATHER', IN KONKANI
^'ATTACK!'^

**AWARD GIVEN TO BEST CADET DURING TRAINING PERIOD

BEFORE LONG, HE WAS IN ACTIVE SERVICE, FIGHTING THE JAPANESE IN BURMA.



RANE'S PROWESS IN BATTLE DID NOT GO UNNOTICED. HE WAS PROMOTED TO THE RANK OF NAIK.

BACK IN THE BLINKERS -



RISING TO THE RANK OF J.C.O. IN THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE ARMY WAS NO MEAN FEAT FOR A SOLDIER.

TRAINING WITH THE BOMBAY ENGINEERS WAS RIGOROUS. IN WARTIME, THE ENGINEERING CORPS PROVIDES SUPPORT TO TROOPS BY BUILDING ROADS, HELIPADS, BRIDGES, ETC. THEY ALSO CLEAR MINES.



*JUNIOR COMMISSIONED OFFICER

*NOW PLINE

RANE TOOK TO HIS STUDIES LIKE A FISH TO WATER.



BASED ON HIS PERFORMANCE, J.C.O. RANE WAS COMMISSIONED INTO THE ARMY. HE UNDERWENT FOUR YEARS OF RIGOROUS TRAINING TO BECOME A COMMISSIONED OFFICER.

DECEMBER, 1947 -



UNFORTUNATELY, THE ARMED FORCES OF INDIA DID NOT HAVE MUCH TIME TO SAVOUR THEIR FREEDOM.



DURING THE TURBULENT PARTITION OF BRITISH INDIA INTO INDIA AND PAKISTAN, THERE WERE A LOT OF POLITICAL DISAGREEMENTS. CHIEF AMONG THEM WAS THE CONFLICT OVER THE STATUS OF THE PRINCELY STATE OF JAMMU & KASHMIR.

IN OCTOBER, 1947, TRIBAL MILITIA AND IRREGULAR PAKISTANI FORCES SWEEP INTO KASHMIR, INTENDING TO TAKE SRINAGAR.

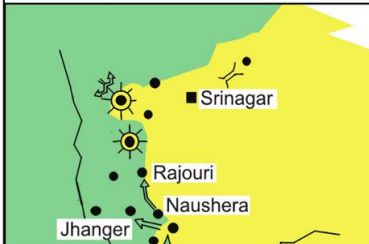


THE STATE FORCES AT THE BORDERS WERE QUICKLY DEFEATED BY THE TRIBALS. MAHARAJA HARI SINGH SOUGHT HELP FROM INDIA AND SIGNED THE INSTRUMENT OF ACCESSION.

INDIAN TROOPS REINFORCED THE STATE FORCES, AND THE SKIRMISHES QUICKLY ESCALATED INTO THE 1947 INDO-PAK WAR.



IN EARLY 1948, THE TRIBAL FORCES CAPTURED THE VILLAGE OF JHANGER, AND ATTACKED THE VILLAGE OF NAUSHERA UNSUCCESSFULLY.



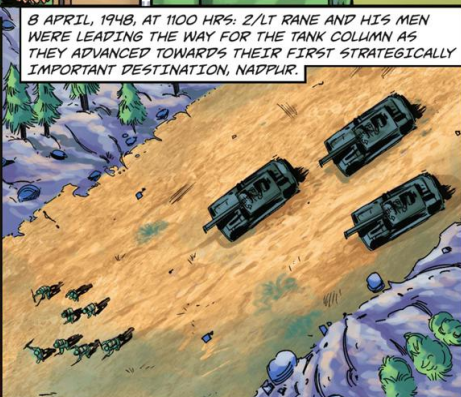
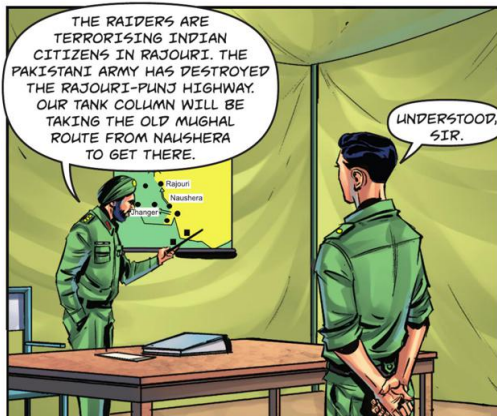
MORE INDIAN TROOPS WERE BROUGHT TO THE FRONT, AND JHANGER WAS QUICKLY RECAPTURED.

RANE WAS NOW A SECOND LIEUTENANT IN THE ARMY, COMMANDING A SECTION OF THE 37 ASSAULT FIELD COMPANY.

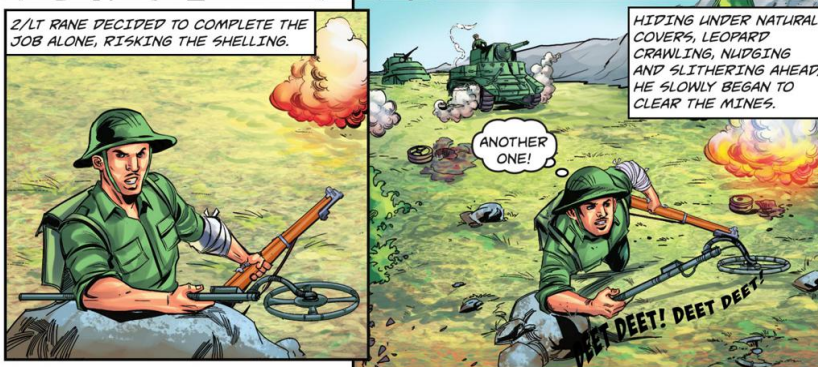
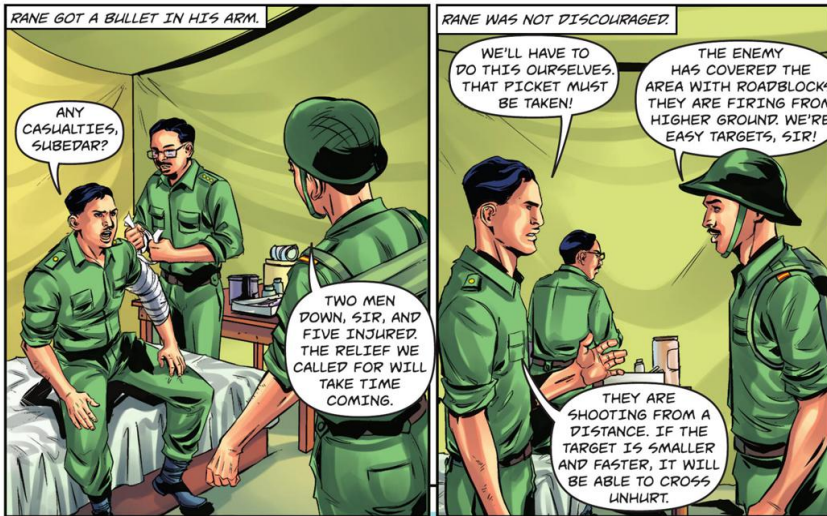


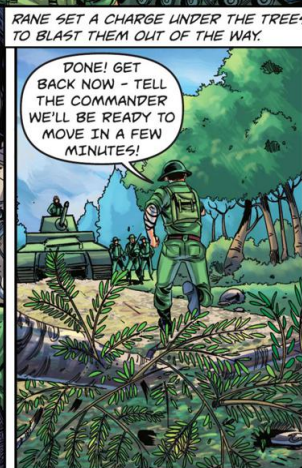
YOU CALLED FOR ME, SIR?

AH... RANE. WE'LL GET RIGHT TO THE BRIEFING.

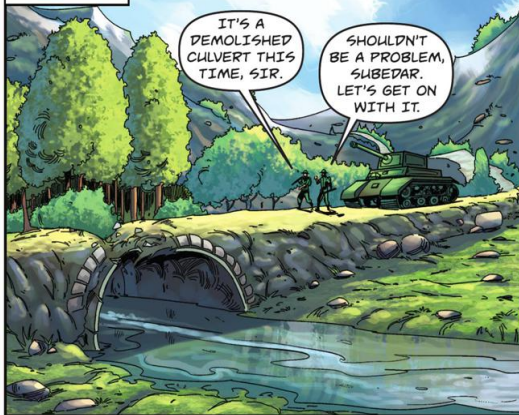


THE ENEMY WAS RAINING 3-INCH MORTARS. THE MINE-CLEARING MEN WERE SITTING DUCKS!





AT 1700 HRS -



BUT BEFORE HE COULD START WORK, THE ENEMY OPENED UP WITH THEIR MACHINE GUNS.



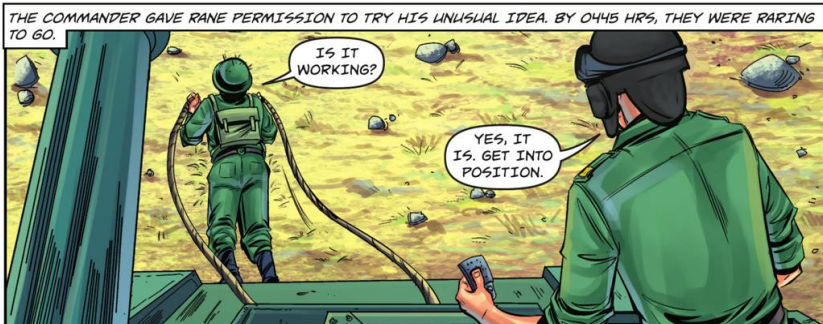
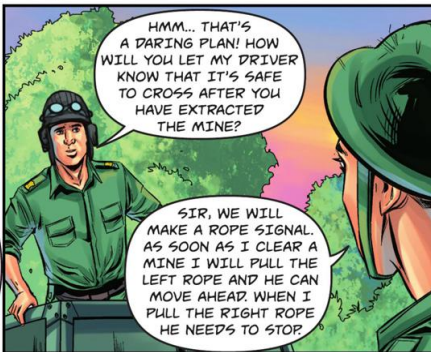
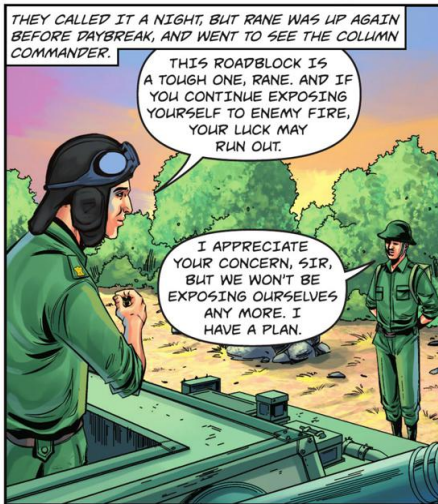
UNDER RANE'S LEADERSHIP, THE MEN CREATED A DIVERSION FOR THE TANKS TO PASS THROUGH.

BY 1815 HRS, THEY HAD CLEARED NUMEROUS ROADBLOCKS AND LIGHT WAS FADING FAST, BUT THEIR BIGGEST CHALLENGE STILL LAY IN FRONT OF THEM.

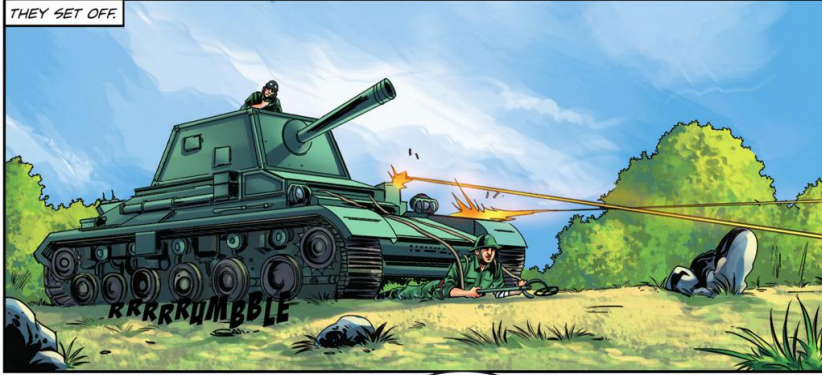


RANE BEGAN CLEARING THE MINES, UNFAZED BY ENEMY FIRE.





THEY SET OFF.



RANE PATIENTLY AND PAINSTAKINGLY WENT ABOUT HIS WORK.



THE ROPE SIGNALS WORKED VERY WELL, AND HE COULD EASILY COMMUNICATE WITH THE OCCUPANTS OF THE TANK.



RANE STEADILY
CLEARED THE WAY FOR
A SINGLE TANK COLUMN
TO PASS THROUGH.

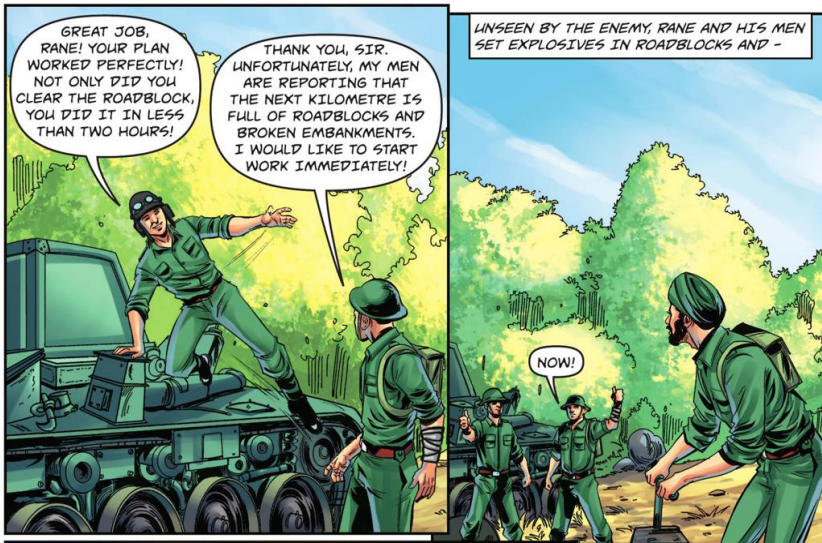


IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE THEY REACHED A ROADBLOCK.



IT'S ALL
UP TO ME NOW.
I CAN'T LET
MY BROTHERS
DOWN!





AT 1400 HRS, AS RANE WAS BUSY CLEARING THE ROAD TO CHINGAS, A VILLAGE 22.5KM FROM RAJOURI -



RANE AND HIS MEN WORKED TIRELESSLY, WITHOUT FOOD OR REST, TILL 2100 HRS THAT NIGHT.



ON 11 APRIL, 1948, BY 1100 HRS, THE ROAD TO CHINGAS WAS OPENED.



RANE CONTINUED CLEARING THE ROADS FROM CHINGAS TO RAJOURI TILL 2200 HRS.

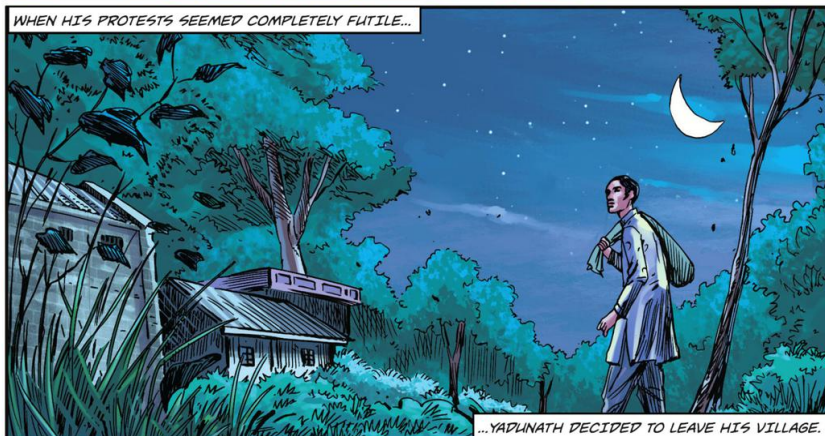
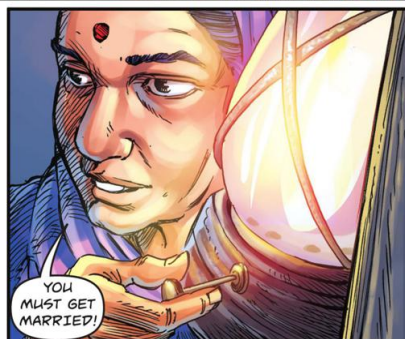
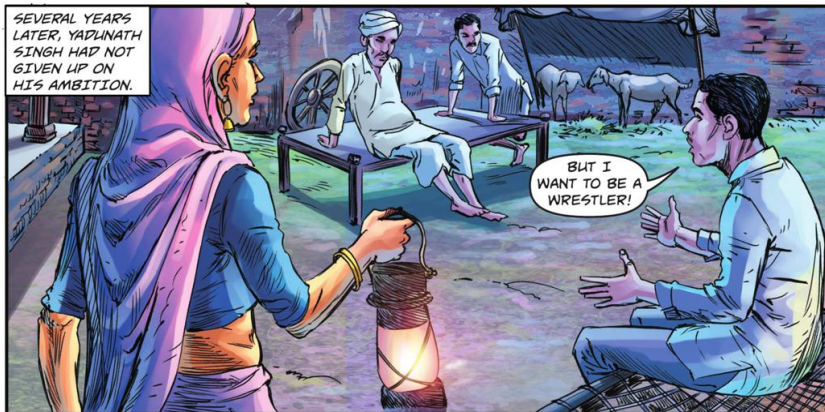
THE INDIAN ARMY SOON LIBERATED RAJOURI, WITH Z/LT RAGHOBA RANE PLAYING A VITAL PART IN THE EFFORT.



FOR HIS VALOUR AND SERVICE WITH COMPLETE DISREGARD FOR PERSONAL SAFETY, HE WAS AWARDED THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA.

NAIK YADUNATH SINGH





SOON, THE PLUCKY YOUNG MAN DECIDED TO JOIN THE ARMY. IT WOULD GIVE HIM THE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE LIFE HE WANTED.



ON 21 NOVEMBER, 1941, YADUNATH SINGH ENROLLED IN 1 RAJPUT REGIMENT AS A SEPOY.

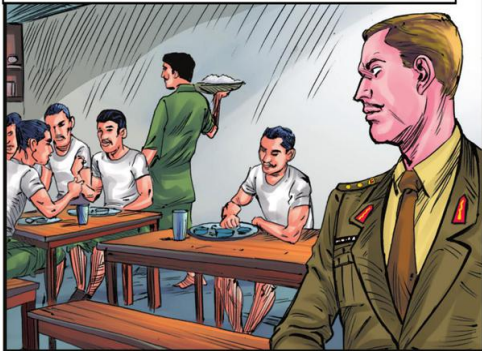


AN ACTIVE AND FIT PERSON, HE PLAYED HARD AND TRAINED HARDER.



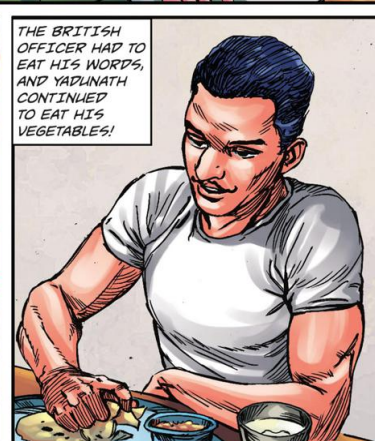
YADUNATH LOVED BEING IN THE ARMY.

ONE DAY, WHEN ALL THE SOLDIERS WERE HAVING LUNCH -



YOU! COME AND SEE ME IN MY OFFICE TOMORROW MORNING.

YES, SIR!



SEVERAL YEARS LATER, AN INDEPENDENT INDIA WAS ENGAGED WITH HER NEIGHBOUR, PAKISTAN, IN A BATTLE OVER TERRITORY IN KASHMIR.

ON 24 DECEMBER, 1947, PAKISTAN HAD CAPTURED JHANGAR. THIS HAD MADE THE POSITION OF THE PAKISTANI ARMY MORE ADVANTAGEOUS.

IN JANUARY, 1948, THE INDIAN ARMY CONDUCTED SEVERAL OPERATIONS TO ENSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO ENEMY BUILDUP ALONG THE BORDER.

IN THE MEANTIME, PAKISTAN'S ARMY HAD ALREADY MADE FOUR FRONTAL ATTACKS ON TAINPHAR IN KASHMIR, BUT THEY HAD BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL. THE INDIAN ARMY REALISED THAT AN ATTACK ON THE NEARBY NAUSHERA POST WAS IMMINENT AND ESTABLISHED STRONG PICKETS IN DEFENCE.

SURE ENOUGH, THE PAKISTAN ARMY SWITCHED ITS EFFORTS TO NAUSHERA. THE LEFT FLANK OF THE NAUSHERA DEFENCES, NO. 2 PICKET, WAS A VITAL POST. A GROUP OF NINE MEN OF 1 RAJPUT HELD THIS SPOT. THEY WERE LED BY YADUNATH SINGH, NOW NAIK YADUNATH SINGH.



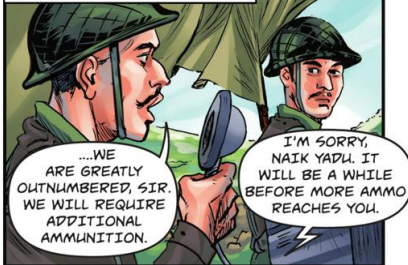
6 FEBRUARY, 1948, WAS PROBABLY THE LONGEST DAY IN THE LIVES OF NAIK YADUNATH SINGH AND HIS EIGHT SOLDIERS. THE ENEMY HAD CREPT UP CLOSE TO THEIR PICKET BEFORE DAYBREAK.



AS THE FIRST RAYS OF SUNLIGHT HIT THE GROUND, THE SOLDIERS OF 1 RAJPUT SPOTTED SOME MOVEMENT.



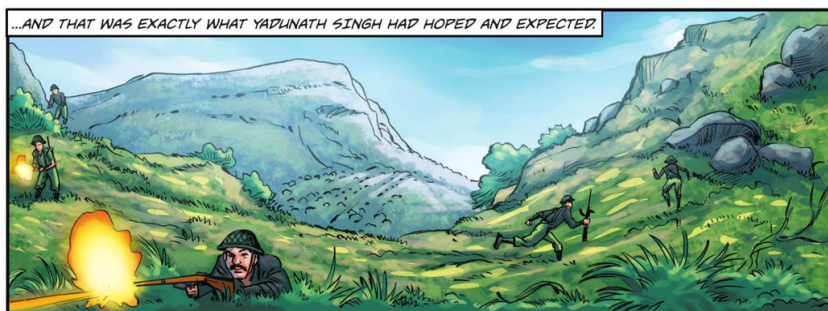
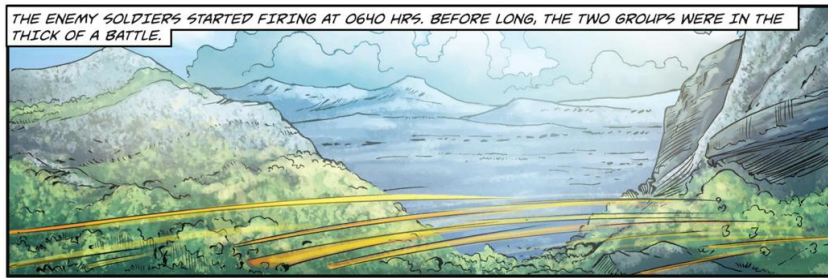
YADUNATH SINGH RADIOED HIS BASE CAMP IMMEDIATELY.



A STRAIGHT-TALKER, YADUNATH TOLD HIS MEN EXACTLY WHAT TO EXPECT.



NAIK YADUNATH HAD A PLAN.





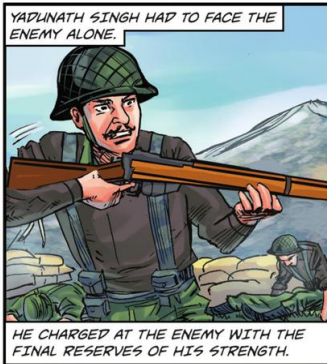


...BUT ALL NINE SOLDIERS WERE LEFT WOUNDED.



YADUNATH SINGH HAD INJURED HIS RIGHT ARM.

BEFORE ANY OF THE OTHERS HAD TIME TO RECOVER, THERE WAS A THIRD ATTACK.



YADUNATH SINGH HAD TO FACE THE ENEMY ALONE.

HE CHARGED AT THE ENEMY WITH THE FINAL RESERVES OF HIS STRENGTH.



UH!

I THOUGHT THEY WERE ALL DEAD.



SEEING THE ENEMY TAKEN BY SURPRISE, YADUNATH THREW THE LAST OF THE GRENADES...

...BUT HE COULD NOT STOP THEM ADVANCING TOWARDS NO. 2 PICKET.

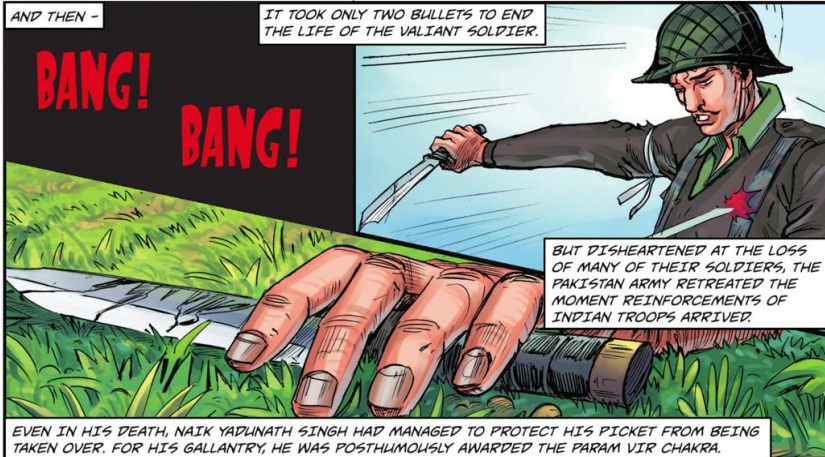
WHAT FOLLOWED WAS A DISPLAY OF UNRELENTING HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT BOTH FIERCE AND RUTHLESS.



AND THEN -

IT TOOK ONLY TWO BULLETS TO END THE LIFE OF THE VALIANT SOLDIER.

BANG!
BANG!



BUT DISHEARTENED AT THE LOSS OF MANY OF THEIR SOLDIERS, THE PAKISTAN ARMY RETREATED THE MOMENT REINFORCEMENTS OF INDIAN TROOPS ARRIVED.

EVEN IN HIS DEATH, NAIK YADUNATH SINGH HAD MANAGED TO PROTECT HIS PICKET FROM BEING TAKEN OVER. FOR HIS GALLANTRY, HE WAS POSTHUMOUSLY AWARDED THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA.

EVEN TODAY, THE PEOPLE OF SHAHJAHANPUR PROUDLY RETELL THE STORY OF THE VALIANT SOLDIER AND CELEBRATE HIS BIRTH AND DEATH ANNIVERSARIES WITH GREAT HONOUR.



...HE NOTICED THAT THERE WAS SOME MOVEMENT NEAR THE...

CHM PIRU SINGH SHEKHAWAT

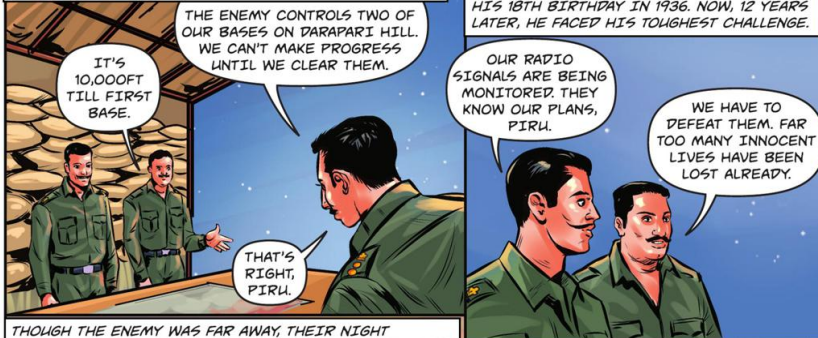
A YEAR HAD PASSED SINCE INDIA GAINED INDEPENDENCE FROM BRITISH RULE, BUT TENSIONS WERE HIGH ON THE JAMMU & KASHMIR BORDER.



PAKISTAN CONTINUES TO ATTACK DESPITE OUR BEATING THEM BACK REPEATEDLY.

THE OFFICER COMMANDING OF DELTA COMPANY, 6 RAJPUTANA RIFLES, WAS CONSULTING WITH HIS MEN. ONE OF THEM WAS C.H.M.* PIRU SINGH SHEKHAWAT.

PAKISTANI RANGERS HAD OCCUPIED THE TITHWAL REGION IN A BID TO TAKE OVER KASHMIR. 6 RAJPUTANA RIFLES HAD THE TASK OF DRIVING THEM OUT.



THE ENEMY CONTROLS TWO OF OUR BASES ON DARAPARI HILL. WE CAN'T MAKE PROGRESS UNTIL WE CLEAR THEM.

IT'S 10,000FT TILL FIRST BASE.

OUR RADIO SIGNALS ARE BEING MONITORED. THEY KNOW OUR PLANS, PIRU.

WE HAVE TO DEFEAT THEM. FAR TOO MANY INNOCENT LIVES HAVE BEEN LOST ALREADY.

THAT'S RIGHT, PIRU.

THOUGH THE ENEMY WAS FAR AWAY, THEIR NIGHT TRAINING COMPELLED THEM TO SPEAK IN HUSHED TONES.



SOLDIERS, WE WILL LAUNCH AN ATTACK ON THE FIRST BASE TONIGHT. THE OTHER TROOPS WILL PROVIDE COVERING FIRE.

*COMPANY HAVILDAR MAJOR



THE DIFFICULT TREK BEGAN AN HOUR AFTER THE BRIEFING.







PIRU ASSESSED THE CLIMB THEY HAD TO MAKE TO GET TO THE ENEMY.



THE PATH IS VERY NARROW AND THE PAKISTANI BUNKERS OVERLOOK THE ENTIRE STRETCH.



WE WILL BE EXPOSED THE WHOLE TIME. WE MUST REMAIN EXTREMELY QUIET IF WE WANT TO TAKE THEM BY SURPRISE!

THE ATTACK WAS LAUNCHED AT 0130 HRS ON 18 JULY, 1948.



THE SOLDIERS MADE GOOD PROGRESS FOR A WHILE BUT WERE SOON SPOTTED BY THE ENEMY.

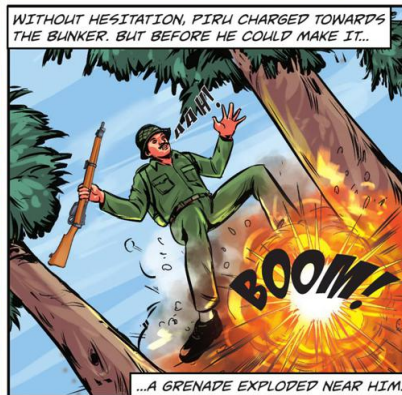


INDIAN TROOPS! ATTACK!



THE PAKISTANIS LAUNCHED A FIERCE ATTACK.





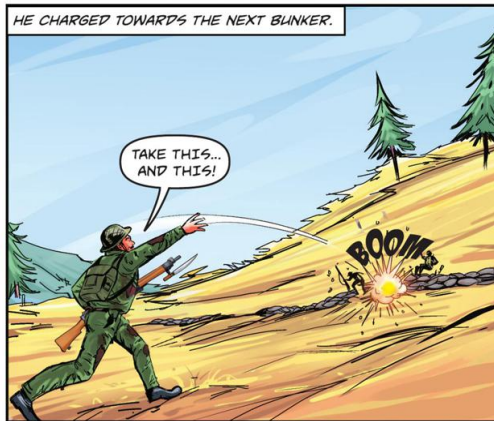
*MEDIUM MACHINE GUN



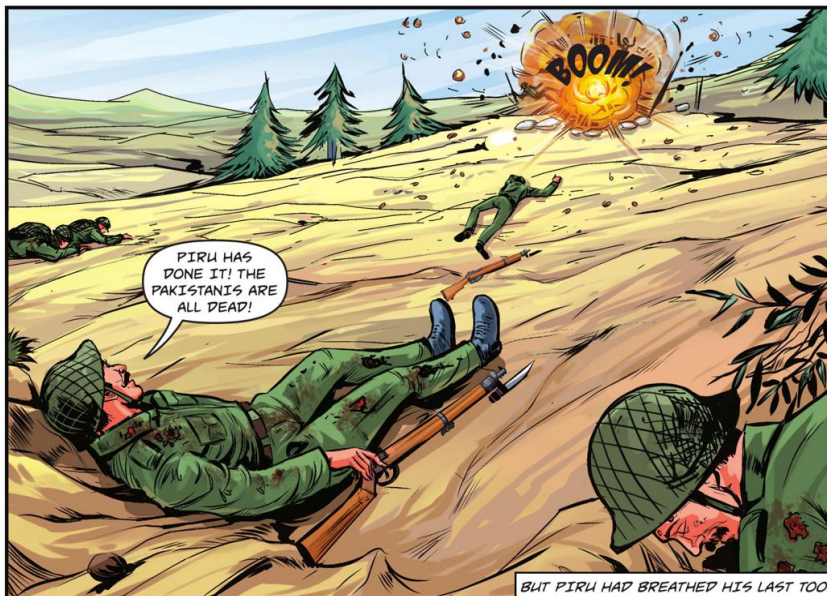
THE WAR CRY OF THE REGIMENT GAVE HIM STRENGTH.







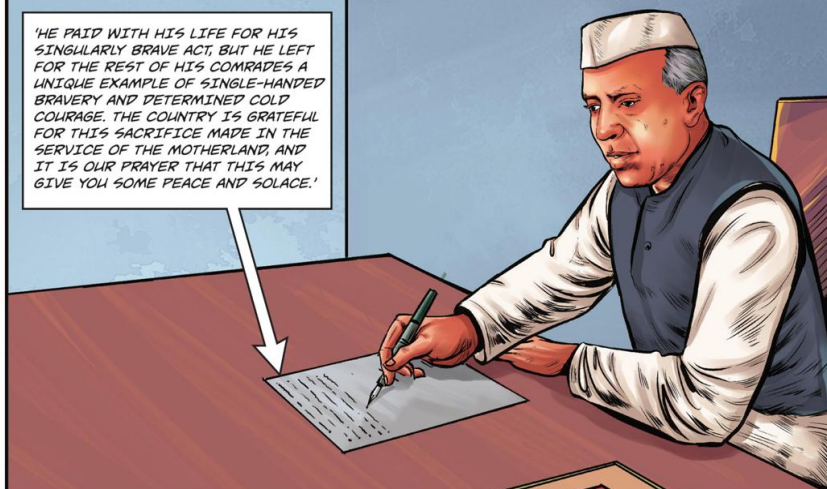




BUT PIRU HAD BREATHED HIS LAST TOO.

PIRU'S BRAVE ACT GAVE THE INDIANS A MAJOR ADVANTAGE. AFTER THE WAR, PRIME MINISTER JAWAHARLAL NEHRU WROTE TO PIRU'S MOTHER, SAYING -

'HE PAID WITH HIS LIFE FOR HIS SINGULARLY BRAVE ACT, BUT HE LEFT FOR THE REST OF HIS COMRADES A UNIQUE EXAMPLE OF SINGLE-HANDED BRAVERY AND DETERMINED COLD COURAGE. THE COUNTRY IS GRATEFUL FOR THIS SACRIFICE MADE IN THE SERVICE OF THE MOTHERLAND, AND IT IS OUR PRAYER THAT THIS MAY GIVE YOU SOME PEACE AND SOLACE.'



PIRU SINGH SHEKHAWAT WAS AWARDED THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA POSTHUMOUSLY FOR HIS HEROIC DEEDS.

CAPTAIN G.S. SALARIA





*AN INTERNATIONAL MILITARY FORCE SENT BY THE UNITED NATIONS TO MAINTAIN A TRUCE BETWEEN COUNTRIES OR COMMUNITIES

*NOW KNOWN AS KINSHASA
**TO WITHDRAW FORMALLY FROM AN ALLIANCE



THE THIRD BATTALION OF THE 1ST GURKHA RIFLES REGIMENT, LED BY LT COL S.S. MAITRA, LEFT FOR CONGO IN THE FIRST WEEK OF APRIL, 1961. AFTER A BRIEF STAY AT LEOPOLDVILLE FOR ORIENTATION, THE BATTALION WAS MOVED TO KAMINA, AN IMPORTANT MILITARY BASE IN NORTHERN KATANGA.











*THE CITY NOW KNOWN AS LUBUMBASHI





*RADIO SPEAK FOR "RECEIVED, WILL COMPLY"



IT'S A LARGE FORCE, SIR. SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 60 AND 90 GENDARMES, THE INTELLIGENCE REPORTS SAID NOTHING ABOUT A SECONDARY ROADBLOCK....

THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO. ENGAGE THEM!

WE ARE ONLY SIXTEEN MEN, CAPTAIN! THEY HEAVILY OUTNUMBER US!

WE HAVE NO CHOICE. IF THEY LINK UP WITH THE GENDARMES AT THE ROUNDABOUT, IT'LL BE BAD FOR 'C' COMPANY.

THEY'RE DUG IN, SIR. IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO HIT THEM FROM THIS POSITION. WHAT DO WE DO?

A BAYONET CHARGE*! IT WILL BE THE LAST THING THEY EXPECT. THEIR FORTIFICATIONS WILL WORK AGAINST THEM.

WE CAN DO THIS, MEN! WE ARE SOLDIERS OF THE INDIAN ARMY! ALL THEY HAVE IS NUMBERS! THE ROCKET LAUNCHER WILL PROVIDE SUPPORT. THE REST OF US WILL ATTACK WITH BAYONETS AND GRENADES.



*WAR CRY OF THE GORKHA REGIMENT





THE BATTLE WAS ALMOST OVER. THE SOLDIERS CHECKED FOR SURVIVORS AND PICKED UP THE WOUNDED. CAPTAIN SALARIA SAT WATCHING.



CAPTAIN! WE DID IT! I DIDN'T THINK WE COULD, BUT WE DID IT!

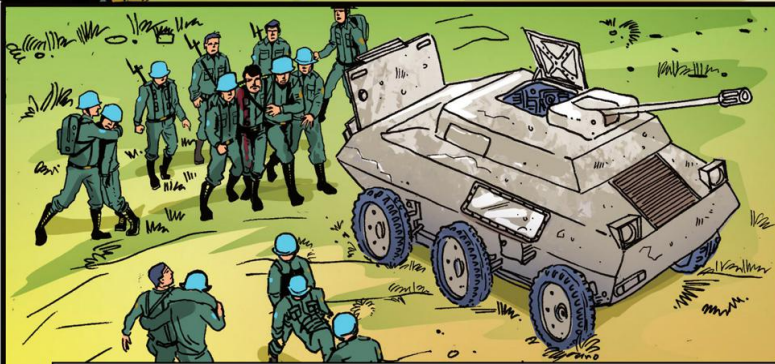
THE CAPTAIN KNEW WE HAD IT IN US! IF IT WASN'T FOR HIM....



CAPTAIN...?



CAPTAIN GURBACHAN SINGH SALARIA'S SMALL FORCE OF 16 MEN HAD TAKEN OUT 40 REBELS AND FORCED THE REST TO FLEE. BUT SALARIA HIMSELF WAS FATALY INJURED.



LATER, IN QUARTERS AT ELIZABETHVILLE, CAPTAIN SALARIA SUCCEUMBED TO HIS INJURIES. HIS LEADERSHIP AND COURAGE WERE IN THE BEST TRADITIONS OF THE INDIAN ARMY. FOR THIS ACT OF BRAVE LEADERSHIP HE WAS POSTHUMOUSLY AWARDED THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA.

MAJOR DHAN SINGH THAPA

IN OCTOBER, 1962, A WAR BEGAN BETWEEN INDIA AND CHINA OVER LAND ON THE HIMALAYAN BORDER. THE CHINESE FORCES ADVANCED TOWARDS INDIA OVER A LARGE AREA, COVERING AKSAI CHIN AND THE MCMAHON LINE.

EVENTUALLY, A CEASEFIRE WAS DECLARED AND THE WAR ENDED ON 20 NOVEMBER, 1962. CHINA GAINED THE UPPER HAND BUT BOTH SIDES SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES.

AGAINST THE LARGER AND BETTER-EQUIPPED CHINESE ARMY, THE INDIAN TROOPS HAD BEEN AT A SEVERE DISADVANTAGE. HOWEVER, INDIAN SOLDIERS FOUGHT WITH UNPARALLELED COURAGE AND SPIRIT, AND SEVERAL HEROES EMERGED FROM THE RANKS. MAJOR DHAN SINGH THAPA WAS ONE SUCH WAR HERO.



21 OCTOBER, 1962, TOKLING:



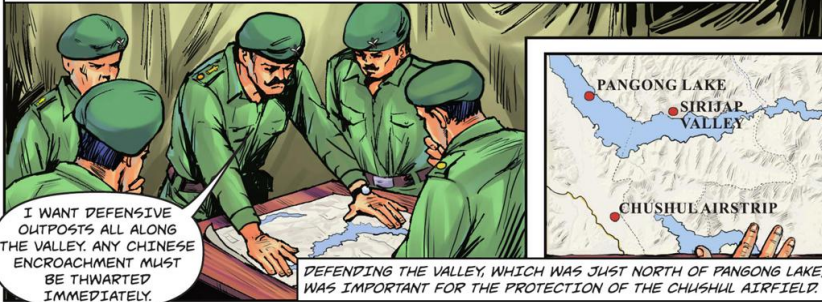
BAD NEWS,
SIR. DHAN SINGH
THAPA AND ALL 28
MEN WITH HIM ARE
REPORTED KILLED
IN ACTION.

THE MESSAGE SENT A WAVE OF GLOOM THROUGH THE MEN AT THE POST.



ON 28 AUGUST, 1949, DHAN SINGH
THAPA WAS COMMISSIONED INTO
8TH GORKHA RIFLES, A GORKHA
REGIMENT OF THE INDIAN ARMY.
HE WAS 21 YEARS OLD.

WHEN THE INDO-CHINA WAR BEGAN IN 1962, SIRIJAP VALLEY IN LADAKH BECAME AN IMPORTANT
STRATEGIC POINT FOR THE INDIAN ARMY. PLANS HAD TO BE MADE TO PROTECT IT.



I WANT DEFENSIVE
OUTPOSTS ALL ALONG
THE VALLEY. ANY CHINESE
ENCROACHMENT MUST
BE THWARTED
IMMEDIATELY.



DEFENDING THE VALLEY, WHICH WAS JUST NORTH OF PANGONG LAKE,
WAS IMPORTANT FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE CHUSHUL AIRFIELD.

SO, IN OCTOBER, 1962, THE BATTALION 1/8 GORKHA RIFLES WAS SENT TO ESTABLISH OUTPOSTS IN SIRIJAP VALLEY.



MAJOR THAPA WAS COMMANDING A PLATOON THAT HELD A FORWARD POST, SIRIJAP-1.

START DIGGING TRENCHES, BOYS. THE CHINESE MAY ATTACK AT ANY MOMENT.

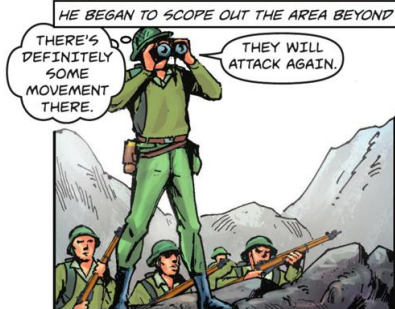


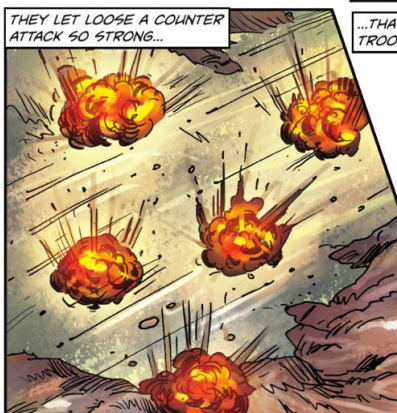
20 OCTOBER, 1962, 0600 HRS: THE DAY WAS JUST DAWNING, WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN -



THE POST IS UNDER FIRE!

AS EXPECTED, THE CHINESE ATTACK HAD BEGUN.











THE TOUGH REBUTTAL TOOK THE ENEMY COMPLETELY BY SURPRISE.



MAJOR THAPA'S TIMING HAD BEEN SPOT ON. THE ENEMY WAS FORCED TO RETREAT ONCE MORE.



THE CHINESE ARMY WAS ANGRY AND FRUSTRATED.



THE CHINESE ARMY HAD TO ENSURE NEVER TO UNDERESTIMATE THEIR ENEMY AGAIN.

SO WHEN THE CHINESE SOLDIERS LAUNCHED A THIRD ATTACK, THEIR INFANTRY WAS NOT ADVANCING ALONE.



EVEN AS HE SAID THIS, MAJOR THAPA REALISED THE FRAGILITY OF THEIR POSITION.



ALTHOUGH THE INDIAN SOLDIERS STUCK TO THAT COMMAND, IT DID NOT TAKE THE CHINESE TOO LONG TO OVERRUN SIRIJAP-1.

MAJOR THAPA COULD NOT BEAR TO SEE HIS POST AND HIS MEN GO DOWN.



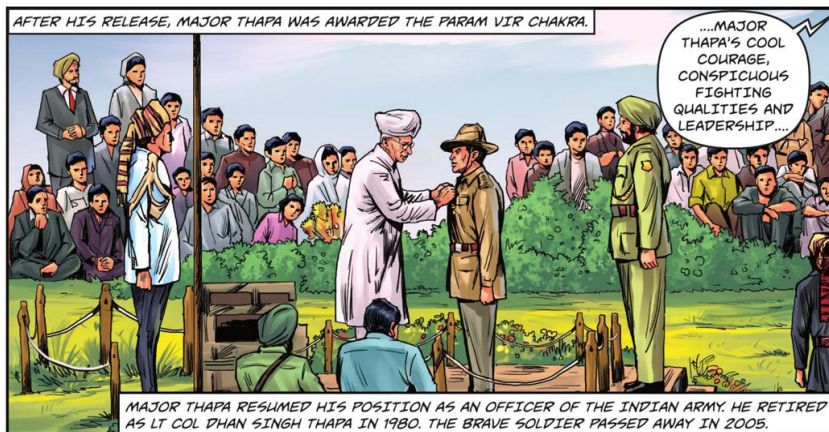
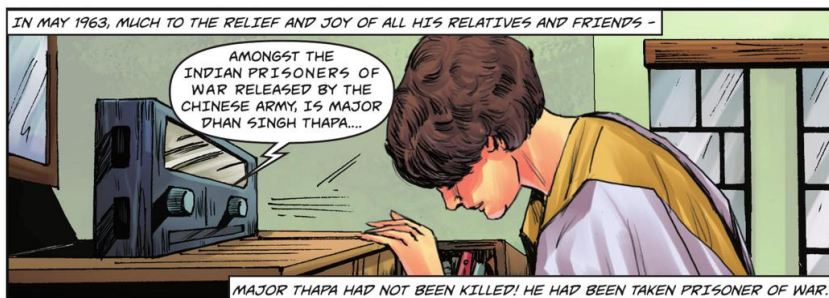
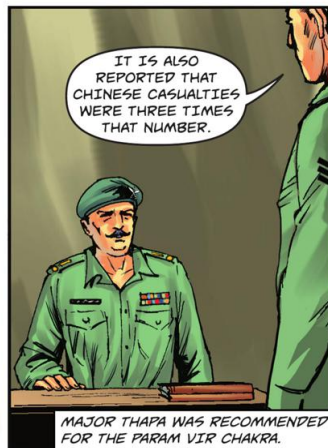
HE STARTED AN INTENSE HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT WITH SEVERAL ENEMY SOLDIERS.



HE FOUGHT LONG AND HARD...



...BUT EVENTUALLY, MAJOR THAPA WAS OVERPOWERED.



SUBEDAR JOGINDER SINGH

IT WAS A COLD WINTER IN 1962 WHEN SUBEDAR JOGINDER SINGH WAS COMMANDING A PLATOON OF 1 SIKH BATTALION IN THE TAWANG SECTOR OF N.E.F.A.*



SIR, OUR TROOPS HAVE SPOTTED SOME ACTIVITY ACROSS THE BORDER.

WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITY, SOLDIER?

EVEN THOUGH THERE HAD BEEN PEACE IN THE REGION, TENSIONS WERE HIGH AS CHINA HAD BEEN STAKING ITS CLAIM OVER CERTAIN AREAS THAT CAME UNDER INDIAN TERRITORY.

IT APPEARS THAT THE CHINESE ARMY IS ASSEMBLING THERE IN HEAVY NUMBERS, SIR.

THAT CAN'T BE! ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?



RECRUITED IN THE ARMY DURING THE 1930S, 42-YEAR-OLD JOGINDER SINGH WAS DUE TO RETIRE BY THE END OF THE YEAR.



YOU WERE RIGHT! THE CONCENTRATION OF CHINESE SOLDIERS DOES SEEM TO HAVE INCREASED.



JUST A FEW DAYS EARLIER, JOGINDER HAD BEEN SUMMONED BY HIS SENIOR OFFICER.



WE HAVE SUFFERED HEAVY LOSSES IN OTHER AREAS, BUT WE STILL HAVE CONTROL OVER TAWANG. THAT'S THE SECTOR THE CHINESE WANT MOST!

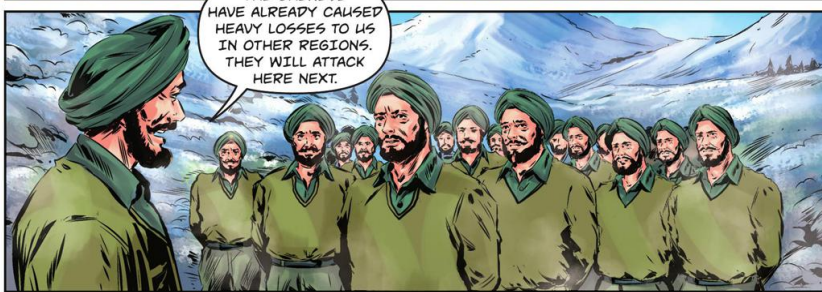
*NORTH-EAST FRONTIER AGENCY, NOW KNOWN AS THE STATE OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH



THE PLATOON OF 1 SIKH BATTALION MADE THE TORTUROUS CLIMB UP TO THE RIDGE AT TONGPENG LA, BATTLING THE ELEMENTS AT OVER 4,400M ABOVE SEA LEVEL.



ONCE AT THE SITE, JOGINDER STUDIED THE AREA AND FIGURED OUT STRATEGIC POINTS OF DEFENCE FOR HIS TROOPS.



IT DID NOT TAKE LONG FOR THE CHINESE ARMY TO MAKE THEIR MOVE. THEY ATTACKED ON 23 OCTOBER, 1962, AT THE FIRST SIGHT OF DAYBREAK.



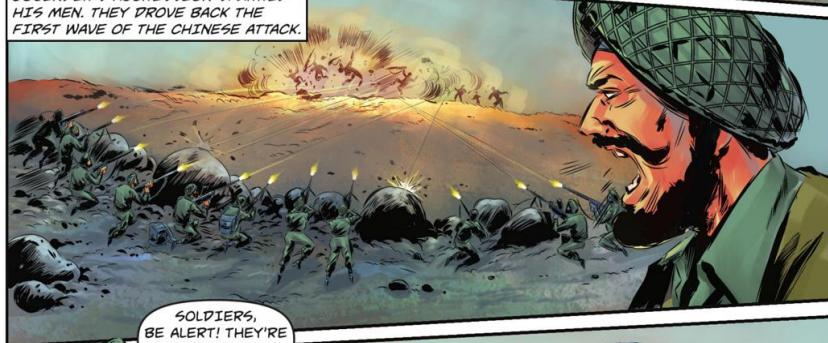
THE INDIANS WERE HEAVILY OUTNUMBERED. THE CHINESE ATTACKED WITH MORE THAN 200 SOLDIERS IN THE FIRST WAVE. JOGINDER AND HIS MEN NUMBERED LESS THAN 40.



ATTACK! NOT ONE OF THEM SHOULD GET THROUGH!



JOGINDER'S AGGRESSION SPURRED HIS MEN. THEY DROVE BACK THE FIRST WAVE OF THE CHINESE ATTACK.



SOLDIERS, BE ALERT! THEY'RE GOING TO COME BACK!



HE WENT TO EACH SOLDIER UNDER HIS COMMAND.

STAND YOUR GROUND! WE MUST NOT GIVE THEM AN INCH!



THE CHINESE SOLDIERS ATTACKED THE MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN AGAIN, USING THE TREES AS COVER.

WE HAVE TO MAKE EACH SHOT COUNT. EVERY BULLET MUST ACCOUNT FOR ONE ENEMY SOLDIER!



THE INDIANS HAD LOST A LOT OF MEN AND WERE RUNNING LOW ON FIREPOWER AS WELL.



THE INDIANS FOUGHT BRAVELY.

WE CANNOT LET THEM THROUGH!





DODGING ENEMY FIRE AND PAYING NO HEED TO HIS INJURY, JOGINDER LUNGED FORWARD...



...AND -



INSPIRED BY HIS COURAGE, JOGINDER'S MEN REFUSED TO YIELD ANY GROUND.



BY THE TIME HE RAN OUT OF AMMUNITION, JOGINDER HAD TAKEN OUT 52 ENEMY SOLDIERS BY HIMSELF. UNFORTUNATELY -



THE SOLDIERS KNEW WHAT THEY HAD TO DO. THEY FIXED THEIR BAYONETS AND CHARGED AT THE ENEMY.



*BATTLE CRY OF THE SIKH REGIMENT

THE CHINESE SOLDIERS OUTNUMBERED THE INDIANS, AND WON THE BATTLE EVENTUALLY. BUT NOT BEFORE JOGINDER AND HIS MEN TOOK THE LIVES OF MANY MORE OF THEM THROUGH SHEER WILL AND COURAGE.

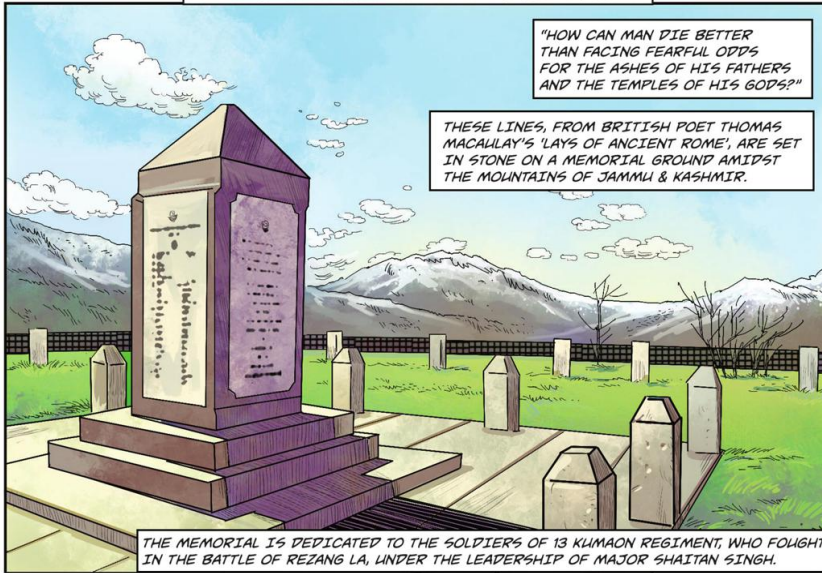


SUBEDAR JOGINDER SINGH WAS TAKEN CAPTIVE AND DIED AS A PRISONER OF WAR. HE WAS AWARDED THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA POSTHUMOUSLY FOR HIS INSPIRING LEADERSHIP AND BRAVERY OF THE HIGHEST ORDER.

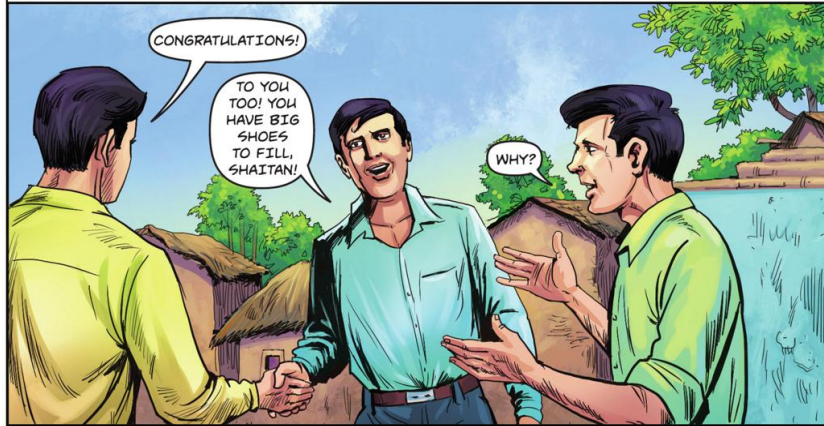


A STATUE COMMEMORATING THIS BRAVE SOLDIER STANDS AS AN INSPIRATION TO ALL IN HIS HOMETOWN OF MOGA.

MAJOR SHAITAN SINGH



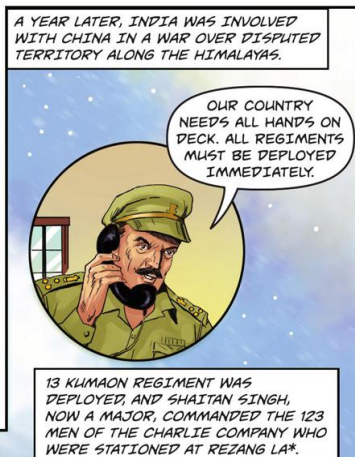
IN 1946, SHAITAN SINGH, ALONG WITH SOME FRIENDS, WAS SELECTED AS A CADET FOR JODHPUR LANCERS.



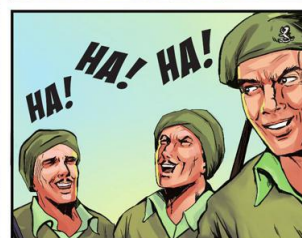
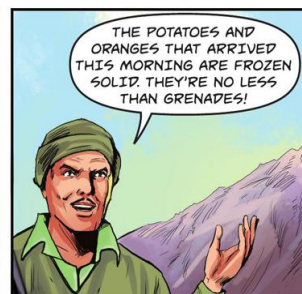
WITH SUCH A STRONG ROLE MODEL, SHAITAN SINGH SURPRISED NO ONE WHEN HE BECAME AN EXEMPLARY SOLDIER. IN 1949, WHEN MAHARAJA HANWANT SINGH OF JODHPUR ACCEDED TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDEPENDENT INDIA, HE WAS SELECTED TO JOIN THE KUMAON REGIMENT OF THE INDIAN ARMY.



*ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE



*A PASS NEAR CHUSHUL VALLEY IN LADAKH







SHAITAN SINGH CROUCHED AND RAN TOWARDS THE BUNKER WHERE THE CHINESE SOLDIERS WERE ADVANCING.



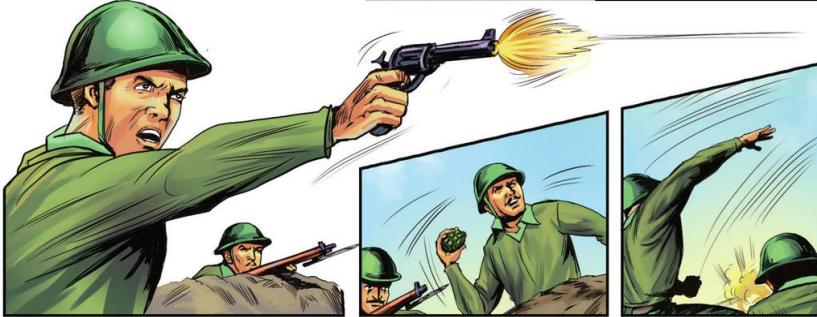
WAIT! DON'T FIRE. LET THEM COME CLOSER.



WHEN THE CHINESE SOLDIERS WERE WITHIN 90M OF THE POST...



...THE PLATOON OPENED FIRE.



I'M GOING TO CHECK ON THE OTHER POSTS.

BUT SIR, YOU'RE INJURED.

I'M FINE.

WITH THE LOSS OF EACH OF OUR SOLDIERS, THE ODDS ARE GETTING STACKED HIGHER AGAINST US. BUT I MUST MAKE SURE THEY DON'T GET DISHEARTENED.



BUT AS SHAITAN SINGH APPROACHED THE BUNKER -



MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO EVACUATE MAJOR SA'AB. HE'S INJURED.

YES, I'M ON IT.



NO NEED FOR THAT. I'LL BE FINE... JUST GIVE ME THE FIRST AID KIT.

BY THE TIME THE NEXT CHINESE ATTACK CAME, CHARLIE COMPANY HAD LOST SEVERAL MEN. BUT FOR EVERY INDIAN SOLDIER WHO LOST HIS LIFE, THERE HAD BEEN ALMOST SEVEN CHINESE CASUALTIES.



THE CHINESE WAVE TACTICS WERE AIMED AT INTIMIDATING AND DISINTEGRATING THE INDIANS BY THE SHEER STRENGTH OF THEIR NUMBERS. ALTHOUGH THEY WERE ADVERSELY OUTNUMBERED, THE FEARLESS GROUP OF INDIAN SOLDIERS REFUSED TO YIELD.





114 INDIAN SOLDIERS DIED THAT DAY BUT THEY TOOK DOWN OVER 1300 ENEMY SOLDIERS, DELIVERING A STAGGERING BLOW TO THE CHINESE ARMY.



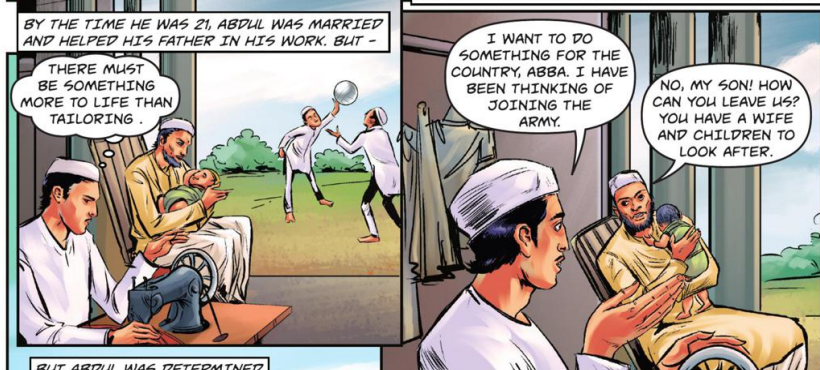
THREE MONTHS AFTER THE BATTLE OF REZANG LA, THE ARMY SENT A DELEGATION TO RECOVER THE BODIES OF THE BRAVE SOLDIERS. AMIDST THE TRAGIC AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE, WHAT STRUCK THEM MOST WAS THAT THE INDIAN SOLDIERS HAD ALL DIED FACING THE ENEMY, WEAPONS IN HAND.

CQMH* ABDUL HAMID

IT WAS THE YEAR 1947. IN THE VILLAGE OF DHAMPUR IN UTTAR PRADESH, 14-YEAR-OLD ABDUL HAMID WAS PRACTISING GATKA*.



ABDUL WAS THE SON OF A TAILOR BUT HIS INTEREST LAY MORE IN SPORTS THAN IN SEWING MACHINES.

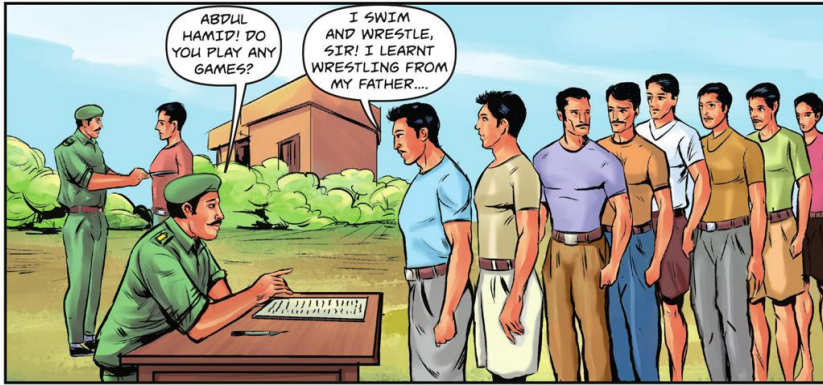


BUT ABDUL WAS DETERMINED TO CHASE HIS DREAM.



*COMPANY QUARTER MASTER HAVILDAR

*AN INDIAN MARTIAL ART IN WHICH A WOODEN STICK IS USED TO SIMULATE SWORD FIGHTING



AFTER HIS TRAINING, ABDUL HAMID JOINED 4TH BATTALION, THE GRENADIERS, AN INFANTRY REGIMENT OF THE INDIAN ARMY. HE REMAINED WITH THE SAME BATTALION ALL HIS SERVICE LIFE.

IN 1962, HE TOOK PART IN THE INDO-CHINA WAR. AFTER THAT HE WAS PROMOTED TO CQMH. DURING THIS PERIOD, ABDUL WAS AWARDED THREE SERVICE MEDALS - THE SAINYA SEVA MEDAL, THE SAMAR SEVA MEDAL AND THE RAKSHA MEDAL.



THE BATTALION WAS SOON ON ITS WAY.



ON REACHING THEIR POSITION, THE MEN DUG TRENCHES WHILE HAMID AND HIS CREW CAMOUFLAGED THEIR ANTI-TANK JEEP.



ON 10 SEPTEMBER, 1965, AT 0600 HRS, THE PAKISTANI ARMY BEGAN INTENSE SHELLING ON THE BATTALION.



BY 0900 HRS -

THEY ARE
SENDING
IN PATTON
TANKS!



SIR! THEY
HAVE RUN OVER
THE TRENCHES IN
OUR FORWARD
POSITIONS!

WE MUST
ACT NOW,
ABDUL!

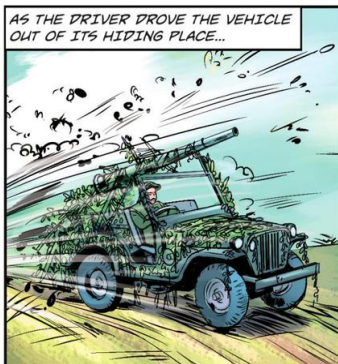


INTO THE
TRENCHES!
EVERYONE!
QUICK!

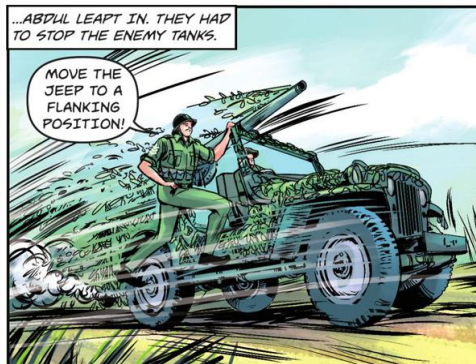
ANTI-TANK
CREW! LET'S
MOVE!



ABDUL AND HIS DRIVER
SPRINTED TO THEIR JEEP



AS THE DRIVER DROVE THE VEHICLE
OUT OF ITS HIDING PLACE...



...ABDUL LEAPT IN. THEY HAD
TO STOP THE ENEMY TANKS.

MOVE THE
JEEP TO A
FLANKING
POSITION!

THE DRIVER POSITIONED THE JEEP.



ABDUL SWUNG THE GUN AROUND...



...AIMED...



...AND FIRED.

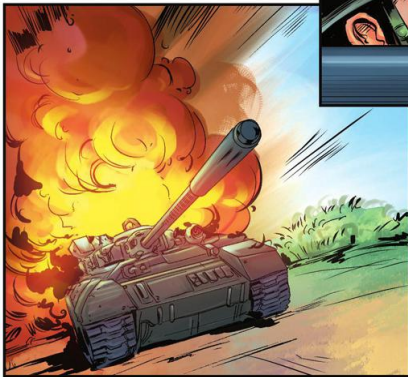


IT WAS A DIRECT HIT.





ABDUL HAMID POSITIONED HIS GUN AND -



BY THIS TIME, THE ENEMY WAS DETERMINED NOT TO LET HIM GET AWAY.



THAT WAS TRUE. ABDUL HAMID FACED THE ENEMY ALONE.



THAT WAS CLOSE. I AM LUCKY.



BUT HIS LUCK WAS RUNNING OUT, FOR THE PAKISTANIS FIRED AGAIN. AND -



GROAN! MY ARM IS GONE. BUT I HAVE TO GET ONE LAST TANK.



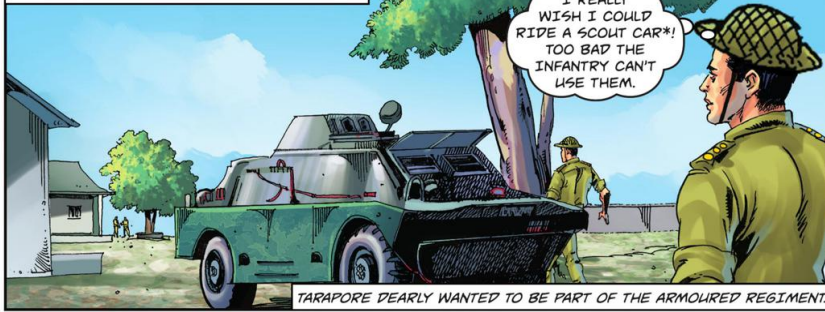
FILLED WITH GRIM DETERMINATION, ABDUL HAMID AIMED THE GUN ONCE AGAIN.





LT COL ARDESHIR BURZORJI TARAPORE

ON 1 JANUARY, 1942, ARDESHIR BURZORJI TARAPORE WAS COMMISSIONED TO THE 7TH HYDERABAD INFANTRY OF THE HYDERABAD STATE FORCES.

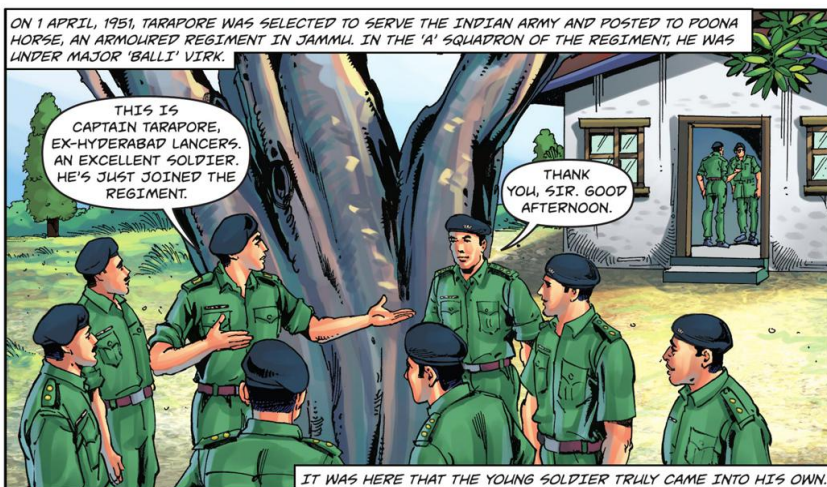
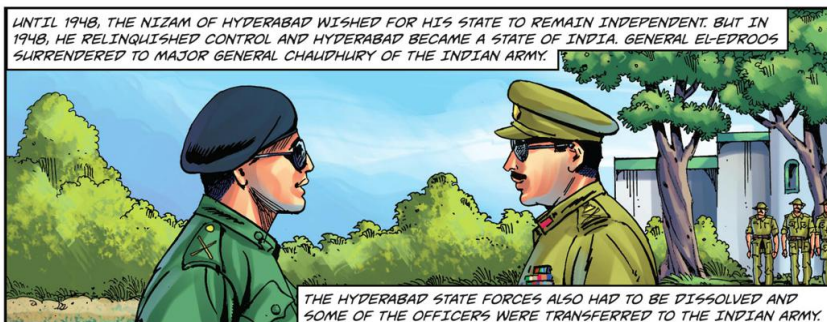


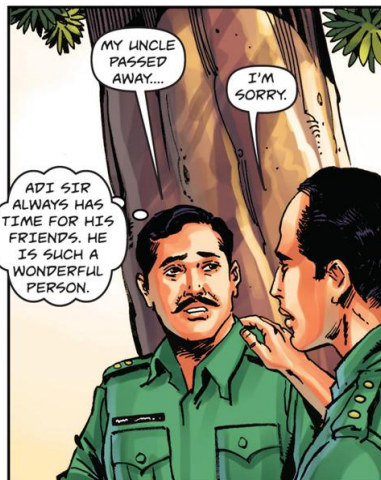
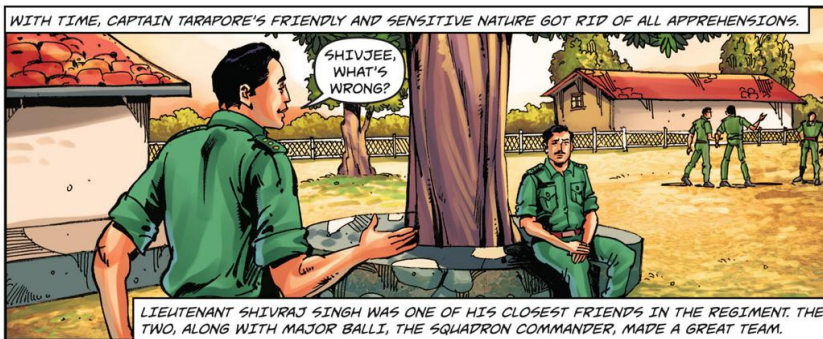
THEN ONE DAY, DURING A TRAINING EXERCISE AT THE GRENADE-THROWING RANGE -



*A FAST MILITARY VEHICLE USED FOR EXPLORING AND SURVEYING



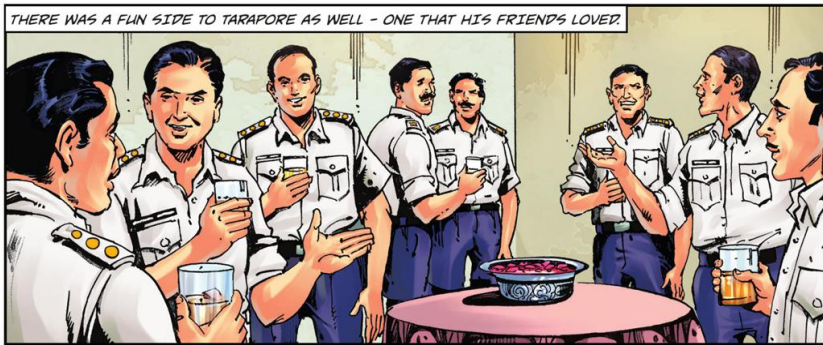






THE REGIMENT WORKED THROUGH THE NIGHT AND WAS ABLE TO MOVE ON SCHEDULE.

*MILITARY ENGINEERING SERVICES



IN AUGUST, 1965, WAR BROKE OUT BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN. THE FIGHTING WAS INTENSE AND THE ARMED FORCES FULLY INVOLVED. THE FIERCEST TANK BATTLE TOOK PLACE IN PHILLORA, SIALKOT.

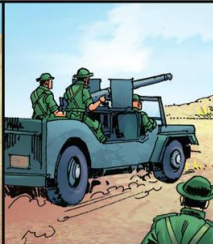
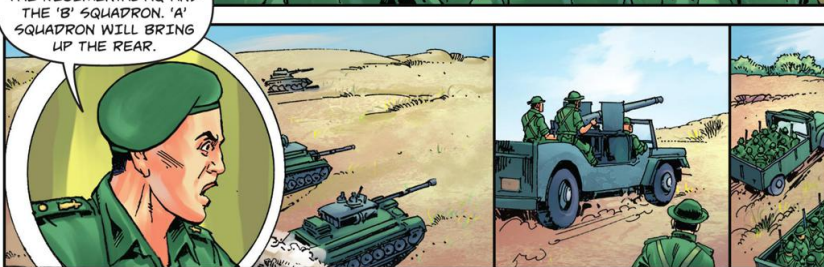


TO CAPTURE PHILLORA, THE INDIAN ARMY DECIDED TO LAUNCH AN ATTACK FROM THE SOUTH. ON 11 SEPTEMBER, 1965 -

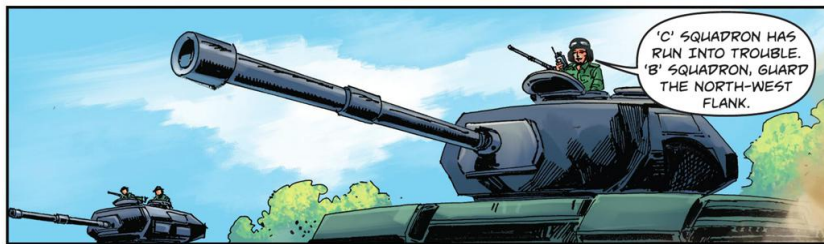
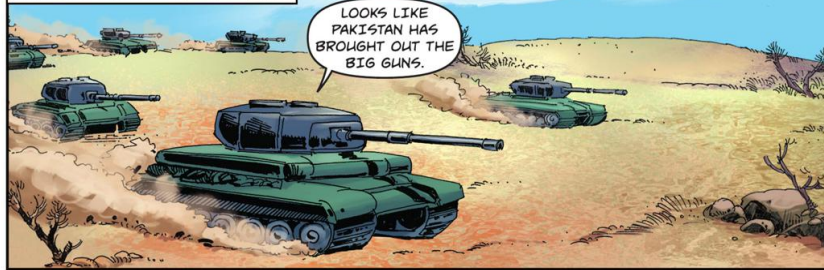


AT THE TIME, LIEUTENANT COLONEL TARAPORE WAS COMMANDING THE 17 HORSE REGIMENT.

THE ATTACK WAS PLANNED -



BUT BEFORE THEY COULD REACH PHILLORA, THE REGIMENT WAS MET WITH A COUNTERATTACK FROM AN ARMoured BRIGADE OF THE ENEMY.



THE REGIMENT STOOD ITS GROUND, AND DEFIED THE CHARGE WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE INFANTRY BATTALION.



THE ENEMY WAS ROUTED.



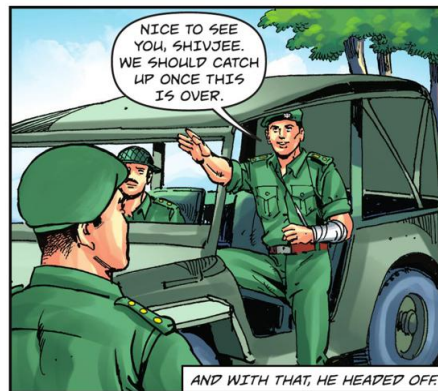


WHEN THEY HALTED, CAPTAIN GURDIAL SINGH FROM 'A' SQUADRON NOTICED THAT TARAPORE WAS INJURED.

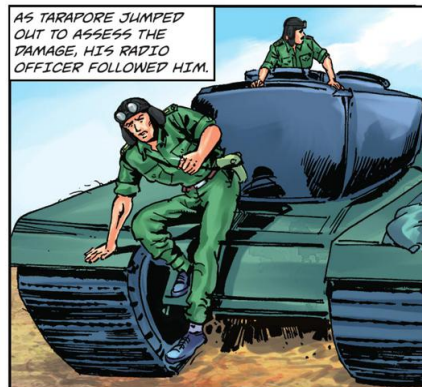
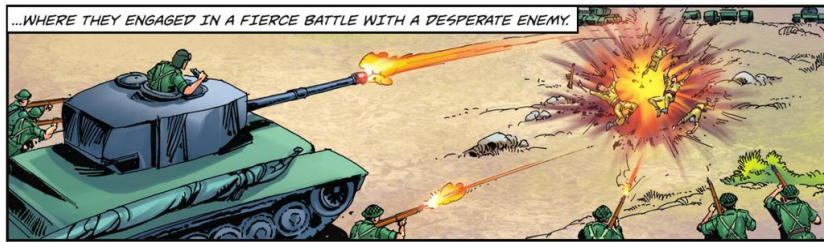
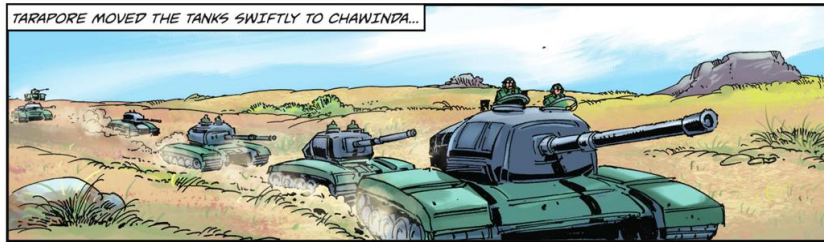
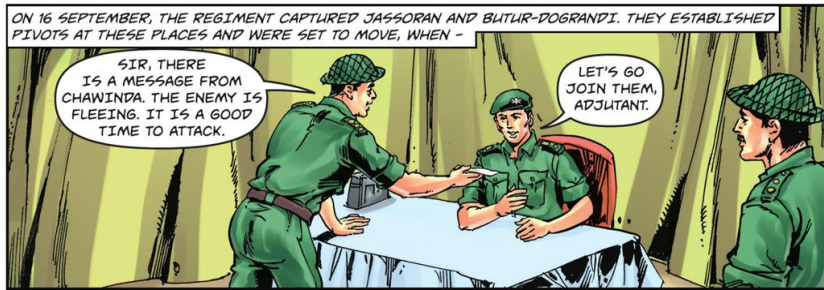


AT PHILLORA, THEY Faced MORE RESISTANCE. BUT THE INDIAN SIDE WAS ORGANISED AND RUTHLESS AND BY THAT AFTERNOON, PHILLORA HAD BEEN CAPTURED.



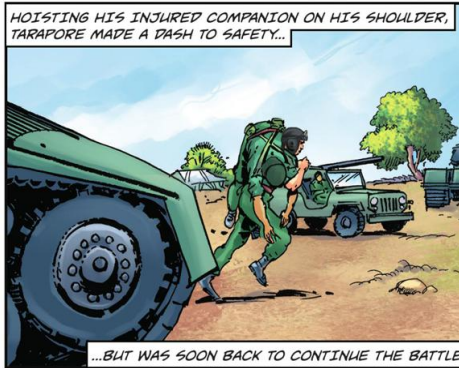


AND WITH THAT, HE HEADED OFF



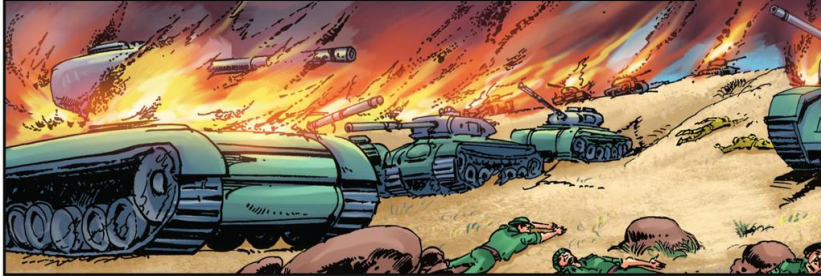


A BULLET CAUGHT THE YOUNG OFFICER JUST AS HE STEPPED OUT.



...BUT WAS SOON BACK TO CONTINUE THE BATTLE.

THE BATTLE OF CHAWINPA WAS ONE OF THE LARGEST TANK BATTLES IN WORLD HISTORY AND INDIA HAD THE UPPER HAND. 60 PAKISTANI TANKS WERE DECIMATED WHILE INDIA LOST ONLY NINE.



BUT ONE OF THESE CASUALTIES WAS LT COL TARAPORE'S TANK.

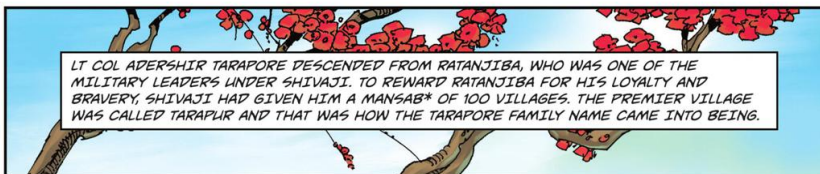


IT RECEIVED A DIRECT HIT.

UNDER TARAPORE'S COMMAND, THE POONA HORSE REGIMENT PERFORMED EXCELLENTLY IN THE 1965 WAR.



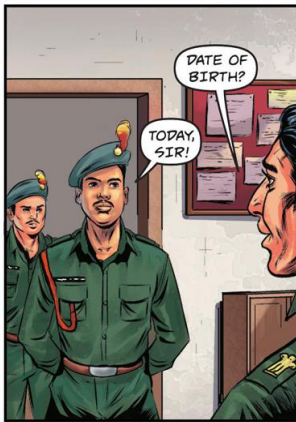
FOR HIS BRAVERY AND EXCEPTIONAL LEADERSHIP, LT COL ARDESHIR BURZORJI TARAPORE WAS POSTHUMOUSLY AWARDED THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA.



*THE MANSABDARI SYSTEM WAS A SYSTEM OF MILITARY RANKING IN MEDIEVAL INDIA.

LANCE NAIK ALBERT EKKA

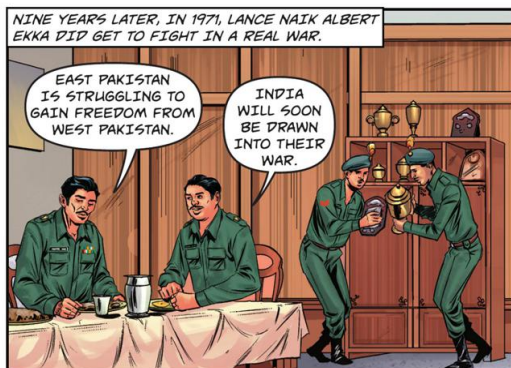
ON 27 DECEMBER, 1962, 14TH BATTALION, BRIGADE OF THE GUARDS OF THE INDIAN ARMY, GOT A NEW RECRUIT.





I CAN'T WAIT FOR TRAINING TO BE A REAL SOLDIER, ALBERT!

AND I CAN'T WAIT TO FIGHT IN A REAL WAR!



NINE YEARS LATER, IN 1971, LANCE NAIK ALBERT EKKA DID GET TO FIGHT IN A REAL WAR.

EAST PAKISTAN IS STRUGGLING TO GAIN FREEDOM FROM WEST PAKISTAN.

INDIA WILL SOON BE DRAWN INTO THEIR WAR.



BUT IT'S NOT OUR WAR. WHY SHOULD WE GET INVOLVED IN A DISPUTE BETWEEN OUR NEIGHBOURS?

SOMETIMES WE HAVE TO, WHEN A NEIGHBOUR IS IN TROUBLE.



A FEW DAYS LATER, ON 3 DECEMBER, 1971, PAKISTAN LAUNCHED AN ATTACK ON INDIA'S WESTERN BORDER'S.

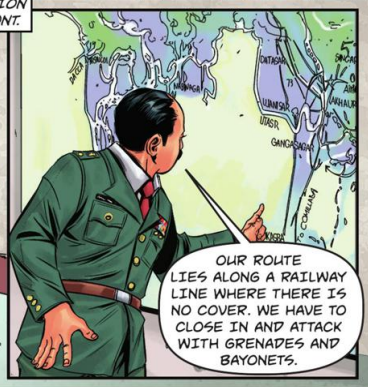
PAKISTAN HAS ATTACKED 11 OF OUR AIRBASES.

NOW WE WILL GET ORDERS TO MOVE TO THE WAR FRONT!

THE MEN OF 14TH GUARDS WERE GIVEN THEIR FIRST MISSION AND ASKED TO MOVE TO GANGASAGAR* ON THE EASTERN FRONT.



WE HAVE TO CAPTURE AKHALIRA*. TO REACH THERE, WE HAVE TO DRIVE OUT THE ENEMY FROM THEIR BUNKERS IN GANGASAGAR.



OUR ROUTE LIES ALONG A RAILWAY LINE WHERE THERE IS NO COVER. WE HAVE TO CLOSE IN AND ATTACK WITH GRENADES AND BAYONETS.

*GANGASAGAR IS IN AGARTALA

*AKHALIRA IS NOW IN BANGLADESH ON THE BORDER NEAR AGARTALA

ALBERT WAS PART OF THE LEFT FORWARD COMPANY OF THE BATTALION WHICH WENT IN FOR THE FIRST ATTACK.



AN ASSAULT GROUP WAS FORMED TO BREAK INTO THE ENEMY LINES. ALBERT WAS PART OF IT.



SUDDENLY, THEY WERE FACED WITH A BARRAGE OF FIRING.



A SOLDIER NEXT TO ALBERT COLLAPSED TO THE GROUND.







AS HE STUMBLED OUT -

ALBERT! YOU ARE INJURED SO BADLY! I'LL TAKE YOU SOMEWHERE SAFE.

NO! I MUST HELP MY COMRADES.

THE COMPANY DESTROYED BUNKERS FOR A DISTANCE OF 1.5KM.

WE ARE ALMOST THROUGH. COME ON!

BUT THEN, A SURPRISE ATTACK!

THAT'S AN M.M.G. IT'S ON THE SECOND FLOOR THERE.

ALBERT PAINFULLY CRAWLED UP TO THE BUILDING, HIS CLOTHES CAKED WITH BLOOD FROM HIS INJURIES.

JUST A LITTLE MORE AND I WILL BE THERE.

LOOMING UP IN FRONT OF HIM WAS THE COMPOUND WALL OF THE BUILDING.



I CANNOT CLIMB THE WALL. THE ENEMY WILL SURELY SPOT ME. I WILL HAVE TO LEAP OVER IT IN ONE SWIFT MOVE.



ALBERT MEASURED HIS RUN-UP TO THE WALL AND -



PUSHING HIS WEAKENED BODY, ALBERT DASHED IN.



THEY HAVEN'T SEEN ME YET.



UNG!

IN A SWIFT MOTION, HE SILENCED THE
ENEMY SOLDIER'S AND THE DEADLY GUN.



WITH THE GUN SILENCED, ALBERT'S COMRADES RAISED A CHEER!

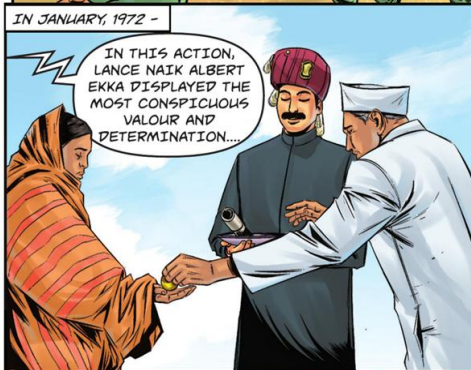
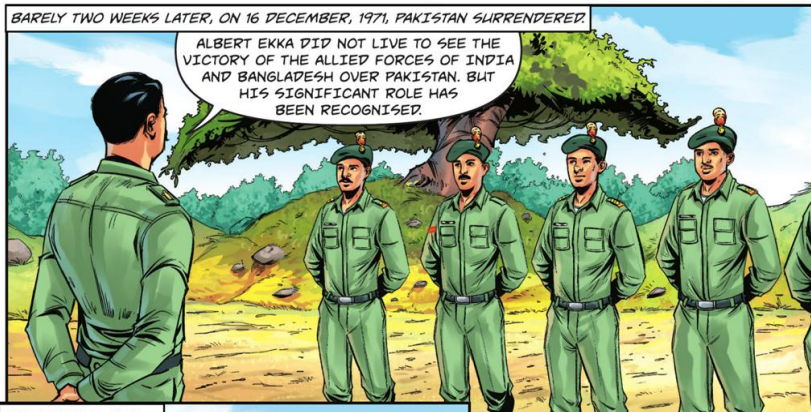


ALBERT STAGGERED OUT.

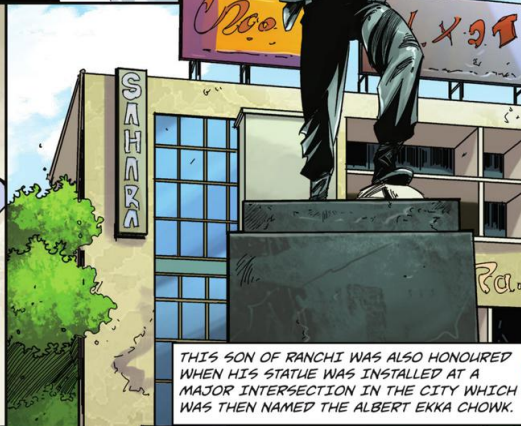


BUT HIS INJURIES HAD TAKEN A HEAVY TOLL.





IN 2000, ON OUR 50TH REPUBLIC DAY, THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT ISSUED A POSTAL STAMP IN ALBERT'S MEMORY.



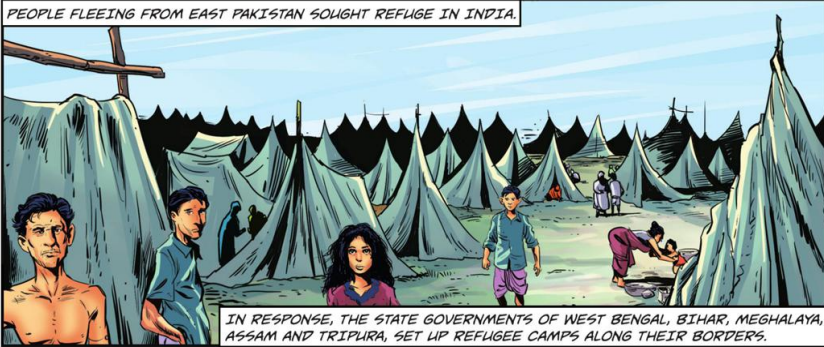
FLYING OFFICER NIRMAL JIT SINGH SEKHON

DURING THE 1971 CONFLICT BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN, AN EVENT ALSO KNOWN AS THE BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR, WEST PAKISTAN SENT MILITARY TO CRUSH THE MOVEMENT FOR FREEDOM TAKING PLACE IN EAST PAKISTAN.



THIS RESULTED IN UNIMAGINABLE DESTRUCTION AND LARGE SCALE MASSACRE OF INNOCENT PEOPLE.

PEOPLE FLEEING FROM EAST PAKISTAN SOUGHT REFUGE IN INDIA.



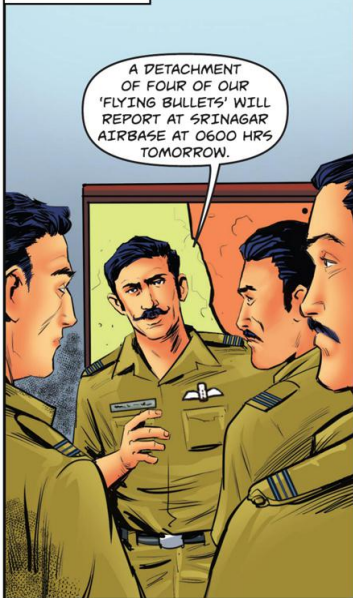
IN RESPONSE, THE STATE GOVERNMENTS OF WEST BENGAL, BIHAR, MEGHALAYA, ASSAM AND TRIPURA, SET UP REFUGEE CAMPS ALONG THEIR BORDERS.

SOON, AT AN AIRBASE IN NORTH INDIA -



IN RETALIATION TO THIS MOVE, WEST PAKISTAN LAUNCHED AIR STRIKES ON ELEVEN INDIAN AIRBASES IN NORTH WESTERN INDIA ON 3 DECEMBER. THIS BLEW INTO A FULL-SCALE WAR BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN THAT ENDED WITH PAKISTAN'S UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER ON 16 DECEMBER, 1971.

NO. 18 SQUADRON OF THE INDIAN AIR FORCE, CALLED 'FLYING BULLETS', WAS CHARGED WITH THE DEFENCE OF THE KASHMIR VALLEY.



A DETACHMENT OF FOUR OF OUR 'FLYING BULLETS' WILL REPORT AT SRINAGAR AIRBASE AT 0600 HRS TOMORROW.

BECAUSE OF AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT MADE IN 1948, DEFENCE AIRCRAFT WERE NOT ALLOWED TO BE STATIONED AT SRINAGAR. SO WHEN THE FIGHTER AIRCRAFT MOVED THERE IN 1971, IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THE AIRCREW AND TECHNICAL PERSONNEL WERE DEALING WITH THE ROUGH TERRAIN AND COLD CLIMATE OF KASHMIR.



DID YOU KNOW IT WOULD BE THIS FREEZING?

NO. I CAN BARELY FEEL MY HANDS!

THE 'FLYING BULLETS' DETACHMENT COMPRISED EIGHT PILOTS, 78 TECHNICAL AND SUPPORT STAFF, BESIDES FOUR FOLLAND GNATS. A LIGHT SUBSONIC FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, THE GNAT WAS DEVELOPED FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM'S ROYAL AIR FORCE AND INDUCTED INTO THE INDIAN AIR FORCE IN 1958.



THE GNAT WAS NICKNAMED 'SABRE SLAYER' BECAUSE OF ITS REPUTATION FROM THE 1965 WAR AGAINST PAKISTAN, WHEN THE TECHNICALLY FAR SUPERIOR PAKISTANI SABRES SUFFERED GREAT LOSSES AT THE HANDS OF THE HUMBLE INDIAN GNATS.

IN DECEMBER, 1971, PAKISTAN PLANNED A MISSION TO ATTACK SRINAGAR AIRBASE WITH A WAVE OF F86 SABRES.



EACH SABRE WAS EQUIPPED WITH TWO 500LB* BOMBS AND 12.7MM GUNS.

AT PESHAWAR AIRBASE OF THE PAKISTAN AIR FORCE (P.A.F.) -

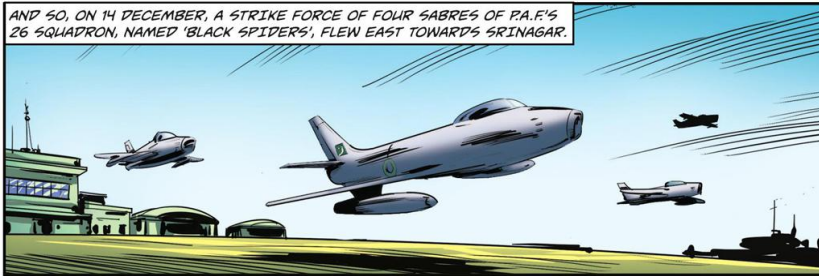


CHANGAZI IS THE LEADER OF THE MISSION. CHANGAZI, GO AHEAD.

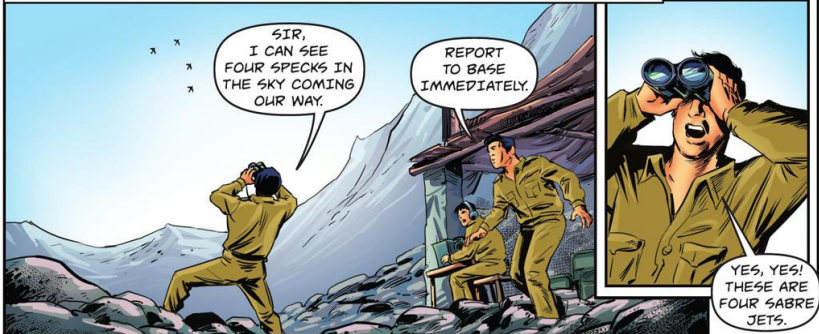
DOTANI, ANDRABI, MIR AND I WILL FLY AT DAWN. THE AIM IS TO POCKMARK THE SRINAGAR AIRFIELD WITH CRATERS. BAIG AND YUSUFZAI WILL....

THE PLAN WAS MADE AND ROLES ASSIGNED.

AND SO, ON 14 DECEMBER, A STRIKE FORCE OF FOUR SABRES OF P.A.F.'S 26 SQUADRON, NAMED 'BLACK SPIDERS', FLEW EAST TOWARDS SRINAGAR.



AS THEY APPROACHED PIR PANJAL, AN INDIAN OBSERVATION POST DETECTED THEM.



SIR, I CAN SEE FOUR SPECKS IN THE SKY COMING OUR WAY.

REPORT TO BASE IMMEDIATELY.

YES, YES! THESE ARE FOUR SABRE JETS.

*1KG = 2.2LB



THE PILOTS AT O.R.P. 1 WERE FLT LT GHUMAN AND FG OFFR SEKHON.

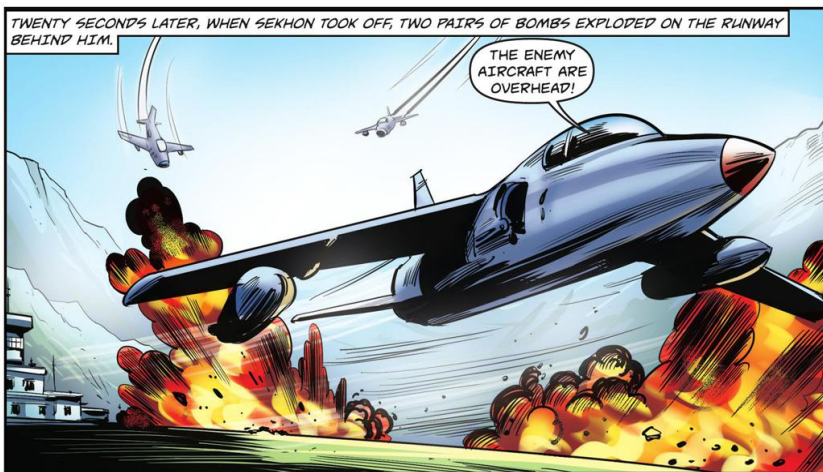


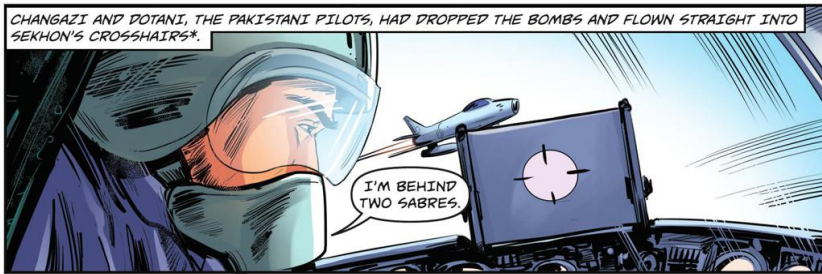
WITHIN SECONDS, BOTH THE OFFICERS WERE READY FOR TAKE-OFF. BUT, AIR DEFENCE HAD STARTED FIRING ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS AT THE INTRUDERS.



*COMMAND GIVEN TO LAUNCH AIRCRAFT FOR COMBAT
*OPERATION READINESS PLATFORM

**BROTHER AND GMAN WERE NICKNAMES GIVEN TO SEKHON AND GHUMAN RESPECTIVELY.



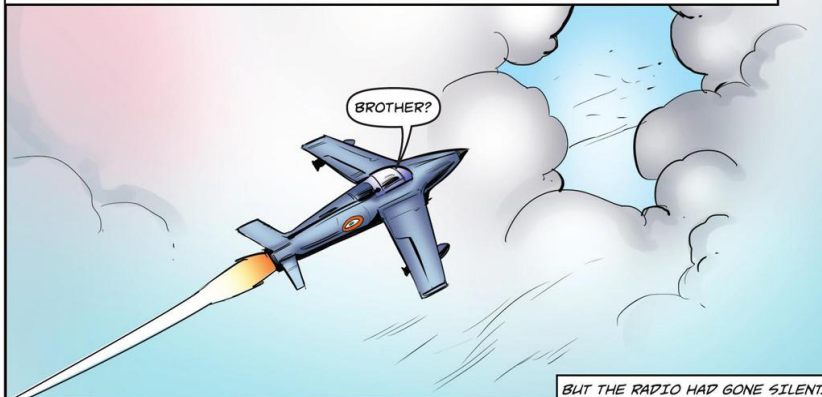


THE SABRES SPED UP BUT SEKHON SWIFTLY MANOEUVRED HIS GNAT AND MANAGED TO STAY ON THEIR TAIL.

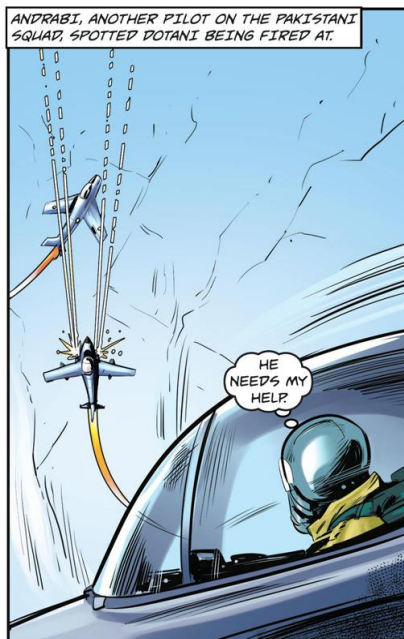
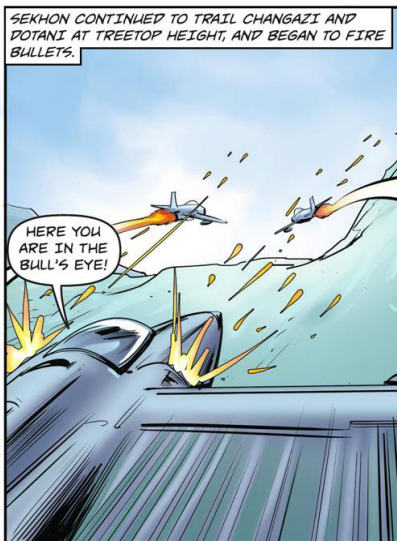


GHUMAN HAD LOST SIGHT OF THE SABRES AND HIS FELLOW GNAT BECAUSE OF THE THICK HAZE.

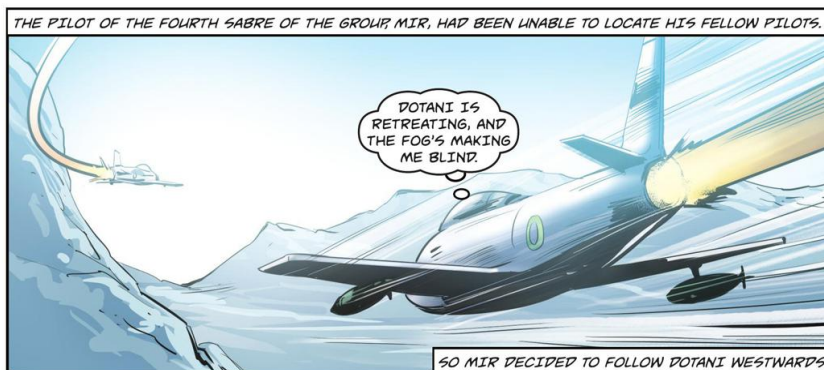
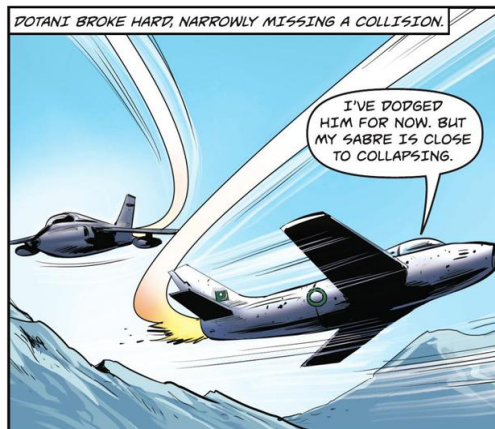
HE DECIDED TO DO AN OVERHEAD LAP, TO PROVIDE SUPPORT THE MOMENT HE COULD SPOT SEKHON.

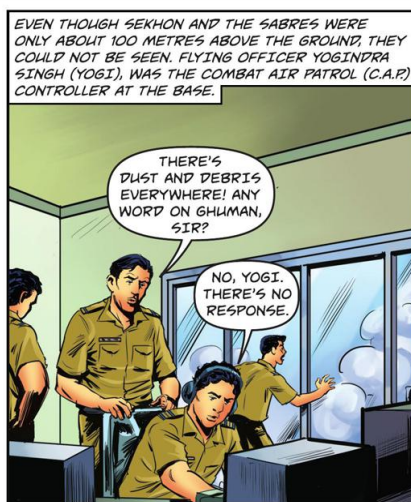
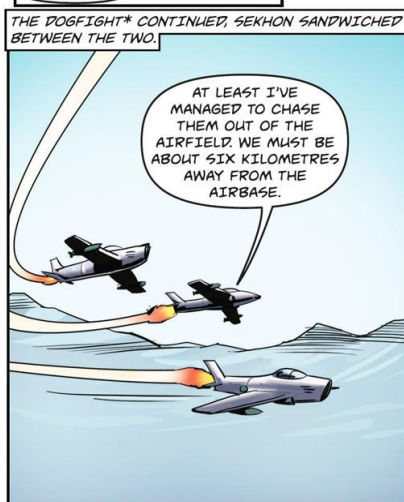
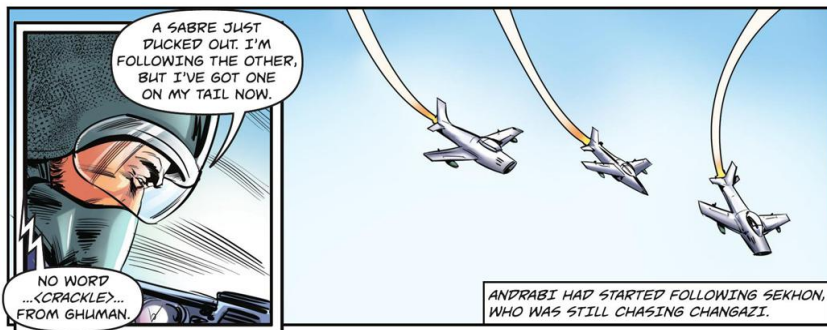


*THE POINT IN AN OPTICAL INSTRUMENT WHICH CENTRES THE TARGET



*DROP TANKS ARE RESERVE TANKS OF FUEL LOCATED EXTERNALLY ON AN AIRCRAFT'S BELLY. WHEN DROPPED, THEY SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE THE WEIGHT ON THE AIRCRAFT, GIVING IT A BURST OF EXTRA SPEED.

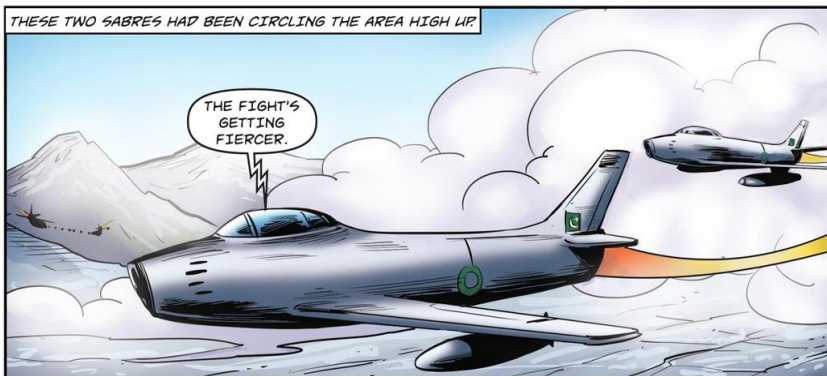
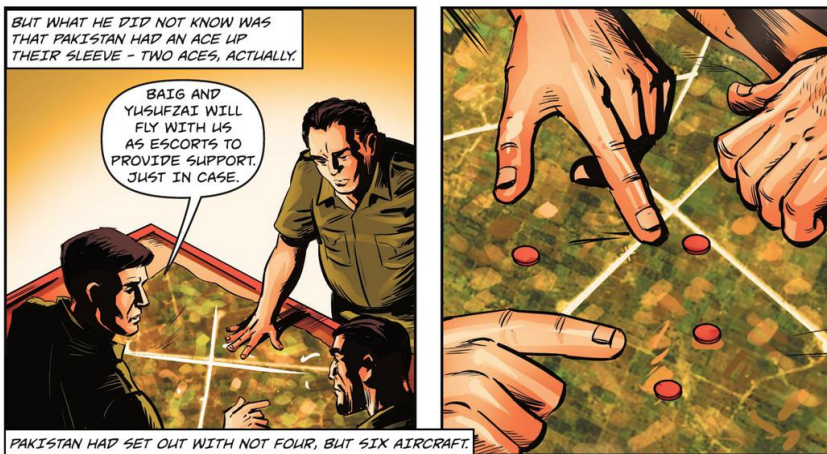
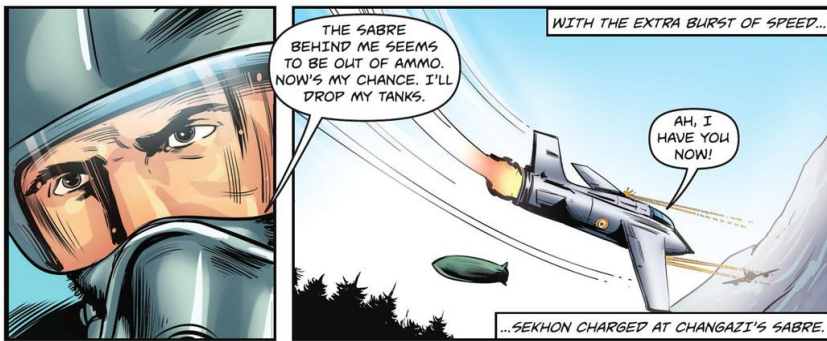


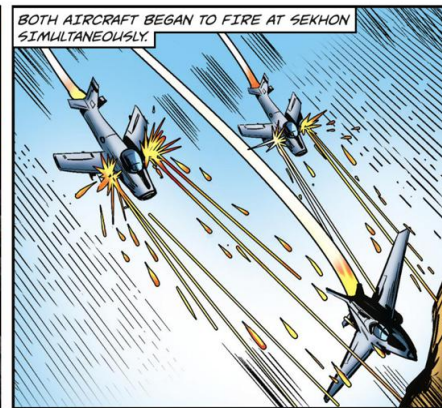
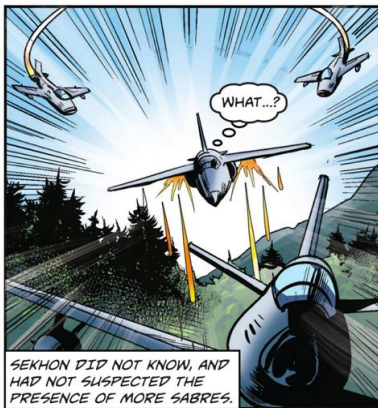
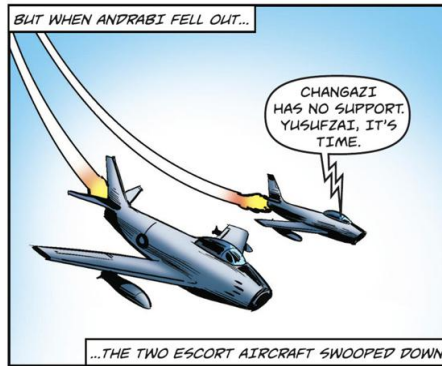
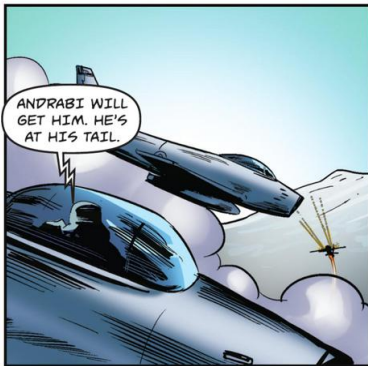


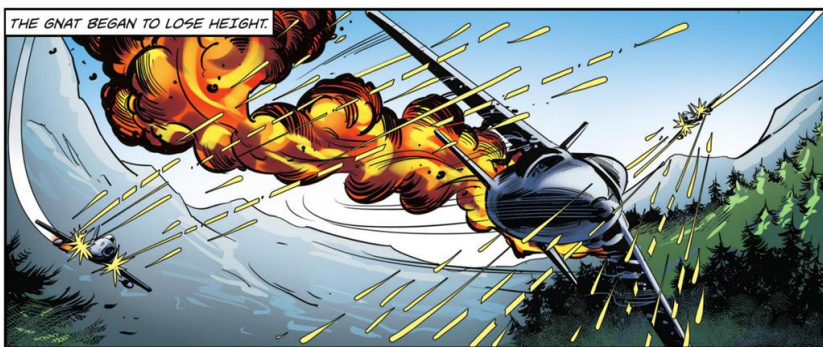
*DOGFIGHT IS THE MILITARY TERM FOR CLOSE QUARTER COMBAT BETWEEN FIGHTER AIRCRAFT



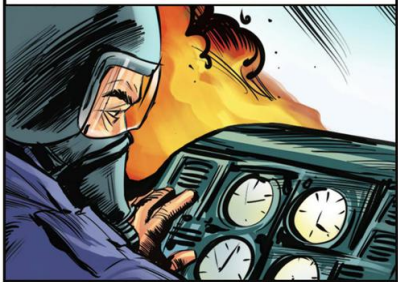
*MEMBERS OF A SQUAD IDENTIFY THEMSELVES BY NUMBERS. 'WINCHESTER' IS A MILITARY TERM USED WHEN ONE IS OUT OF AMMUNITION.







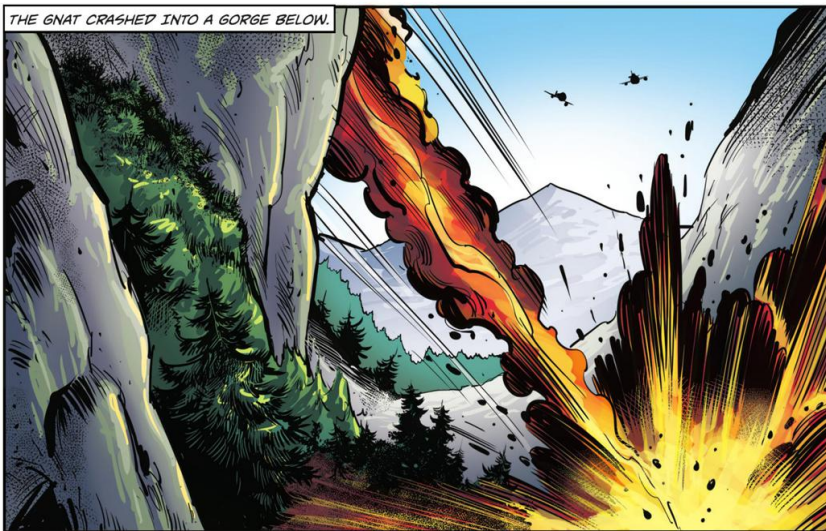
SEEING NO WAY OF RECOVERING HIS AIRCRAFT...



...SEKHON PULLED THE HANDLE ON HIS EJECTION SEAT.

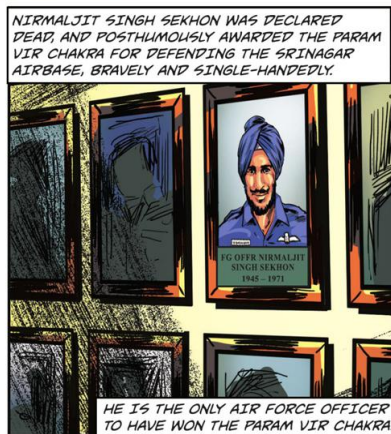


THE GNAT CRASHED INTO A GORGE BELOW.



THE PAKISTANI SABRES RETURNED TO THEIR BASE.





2/LT ARUN KHETARPAL

ARUN KHETARPAL WAS BORN INTO A FAMILY OF SOLDIERS. THE STRAPPING YOUNG BOY LOOKED EVERY INCH AN ARMY MAN.



SO, WHEN HE JOINED THE N.D.A.* IN 1967, IT SEEMED LIKE THE PATH HE WAS MEANT TO TAKE.

IN 1970, HE MOVED TO THE INDIAN MILITARY ACADEMY AND PASSED OUT AS A COMMISSIONED OFFICER IN 1971.



HE WAS INDUCTED INTO 17 POONA HORSE, AN ARMoured REGIMENT.

JUST SIX MONTHS LATER, IN OCTOBER, 1971 -

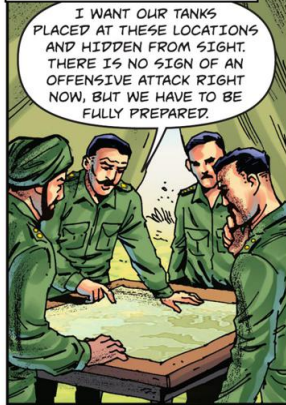


THE CONFLICT BETWEEN WEST PAKISTAN AND EAST PAKISTAN WAS INCREASING. INDIA HAD DECIDED TO PROVIDE MILITARY SUPPORT TO EAST PAKISTAN.



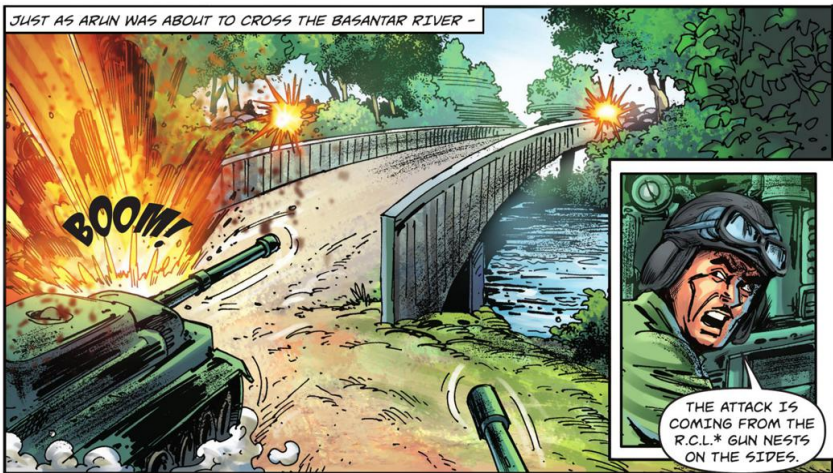
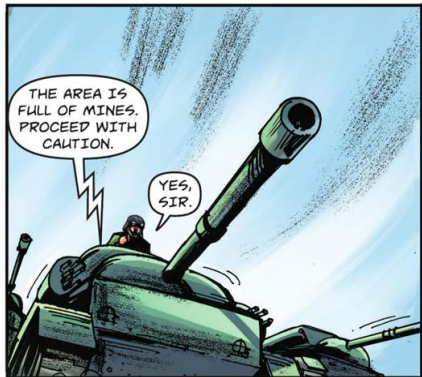
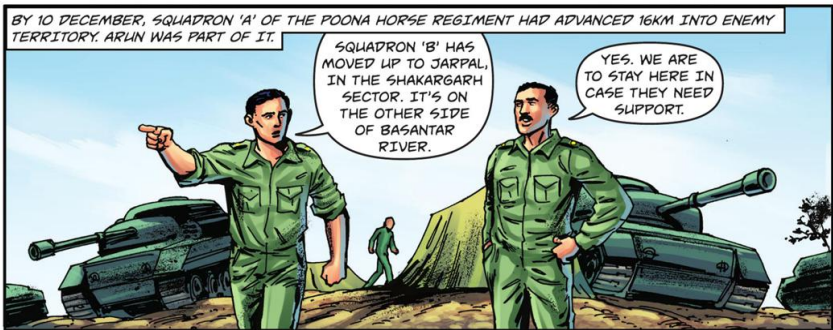
*NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY

AS A PREEMPTIVE MEASURE, THE INDIAN ARMY SENT MEN TO INDIA'S WESTERN BORDER.

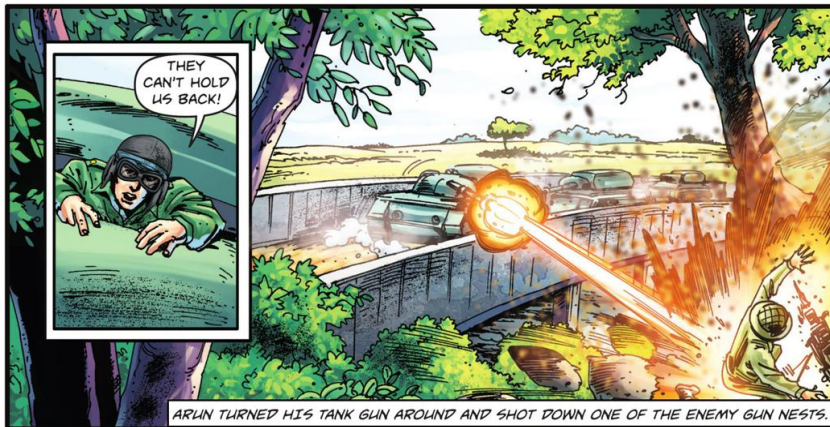


BEFORE THE INDIAN ARMY COULD PROCEED, THEY HAD TO CLEAR THE AREA OF MINES.

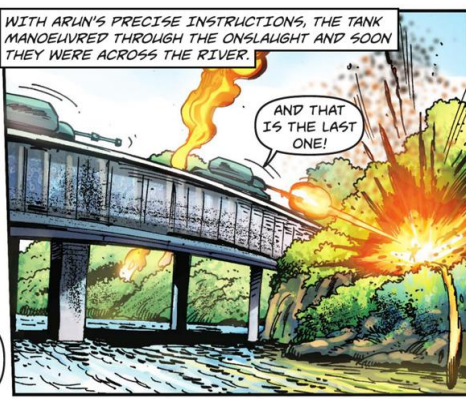




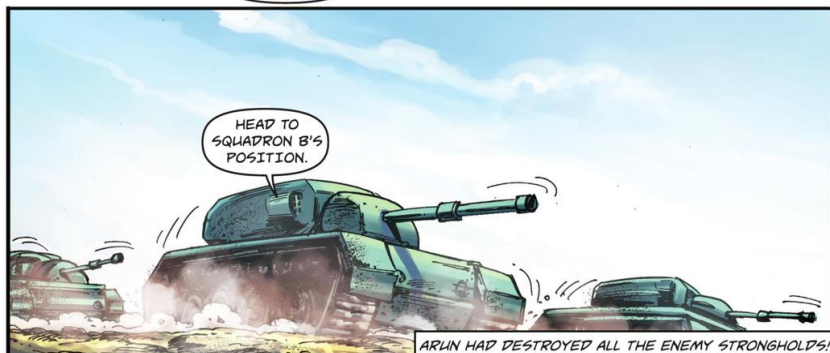
*RECOILLESS GUNS



ARUN TURNED HIS TANK GUN AROUND AND SHOT DOWN ONE OF THE ENEMY GUN NESTS.

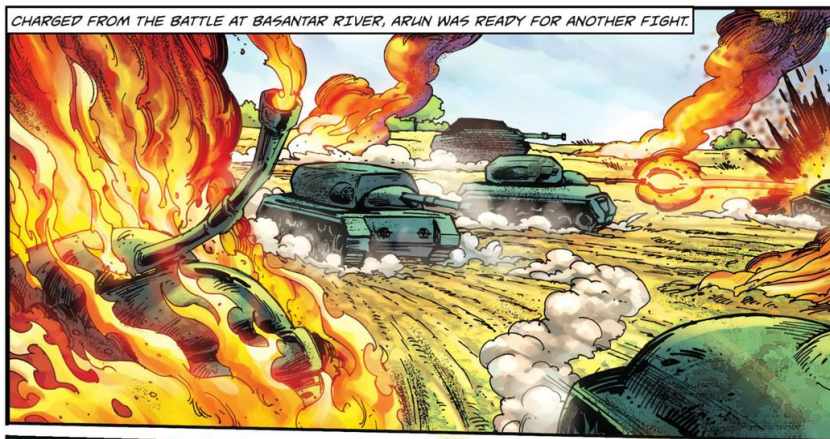
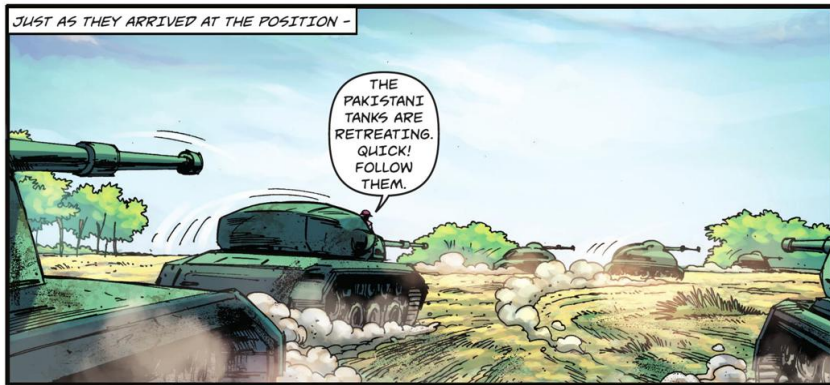


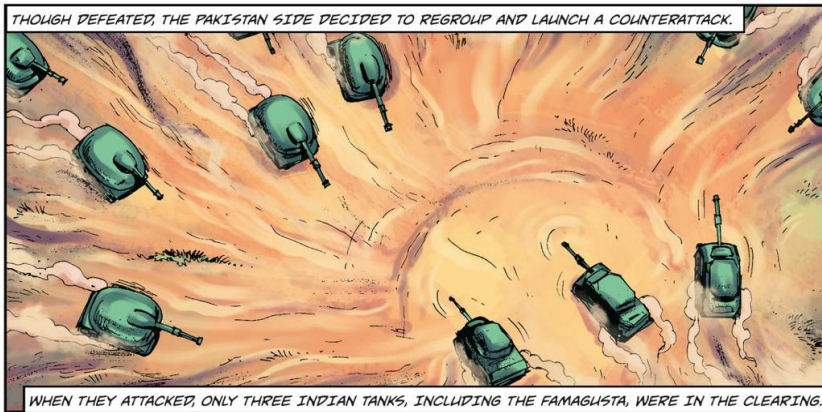
WITH ARUN'S PRECISE INSTRUCTIONS, THE TANK MANOEUVERED THROUGH THE ONSLAUGHT AND SOON THEY WERE ACROSS THE RIVER.



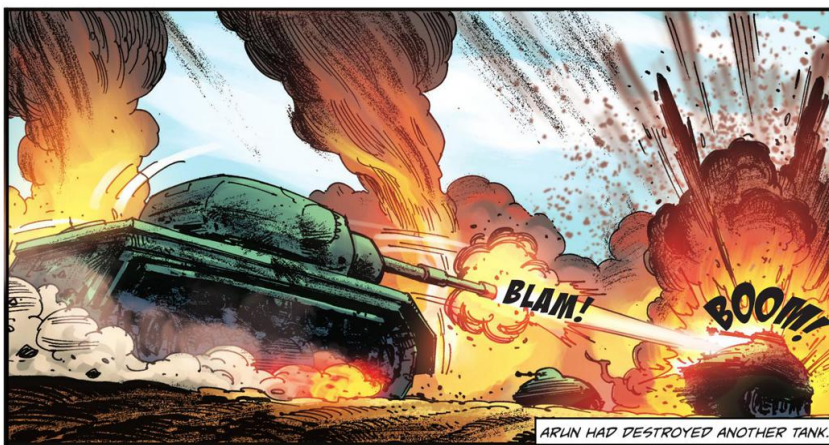
ARUN HAD DESTROYED ALL THE ENEMY STRONGHOLDS!

*TANKS ARE GIVEN NAMES SO THAT IT IS EASY TO IDENTIFY ONE TANK FROM ANOTHER DURING BATTLE. FAMAGUSTA WAS THE NAME OF ARUN'S TANK.

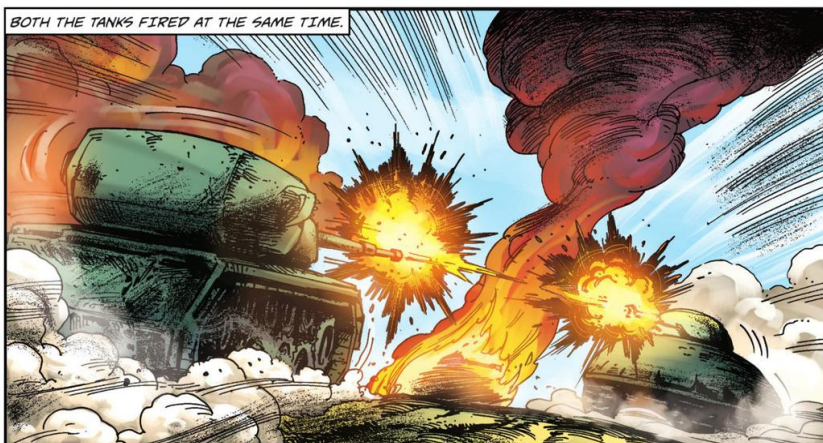
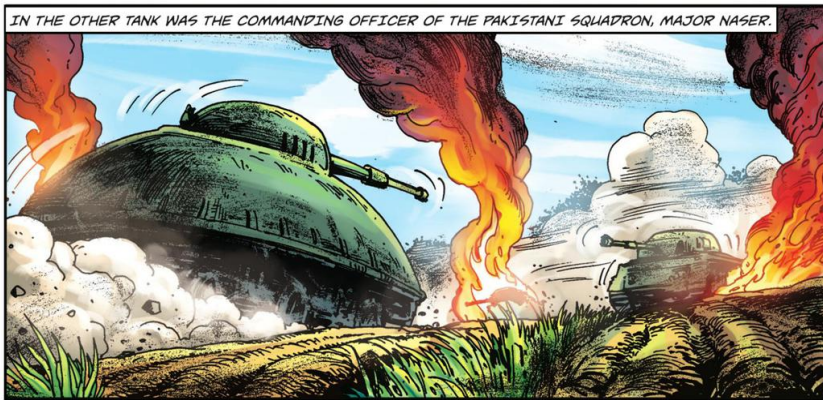
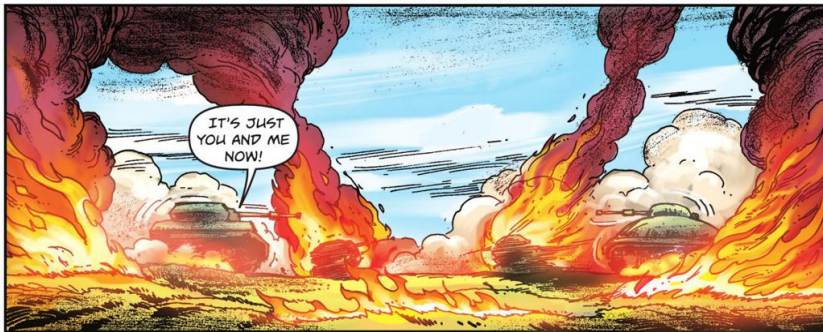


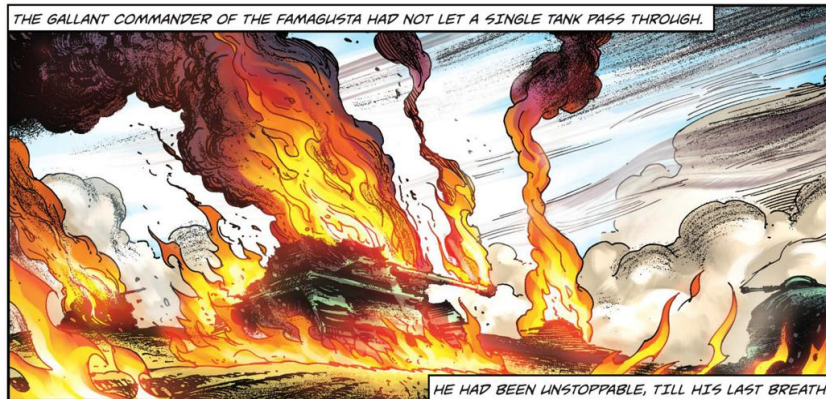
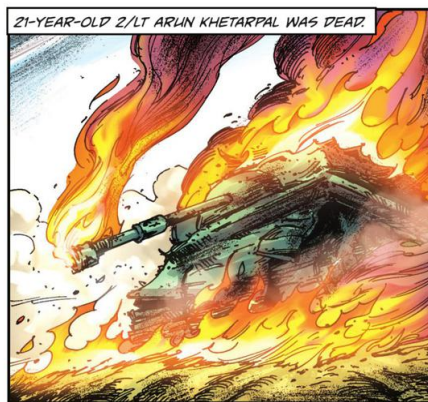
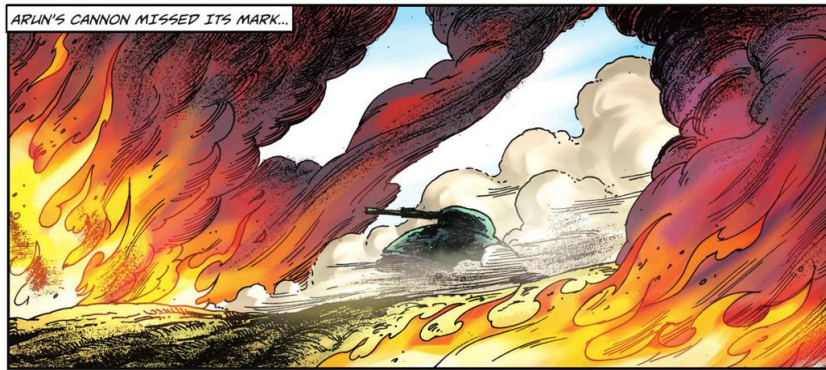


THE OTHER TWO TANKS IN ARUN'S TROOP HAD BEEN DESTROYED. IT WAS UP TO ARUN TO FIGHT OFF THE REMAINING FOUR ENEMY TANKS.

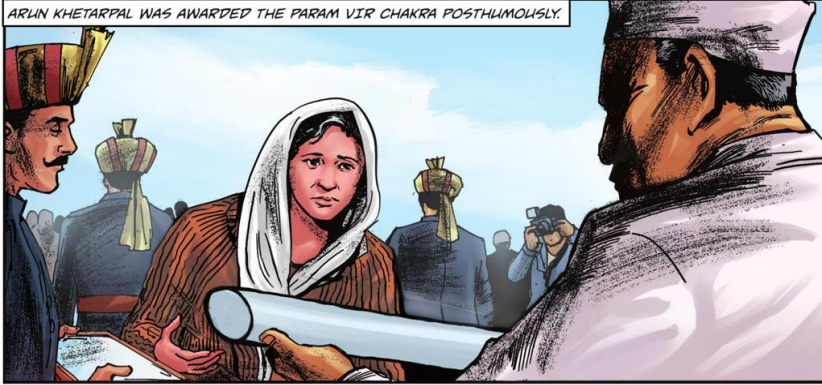


ARUN HAD DESTROYED ANOTHER TANK.





ARUN KHETARPAL WAS AWARDED THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA POSTHUMOUSLY.

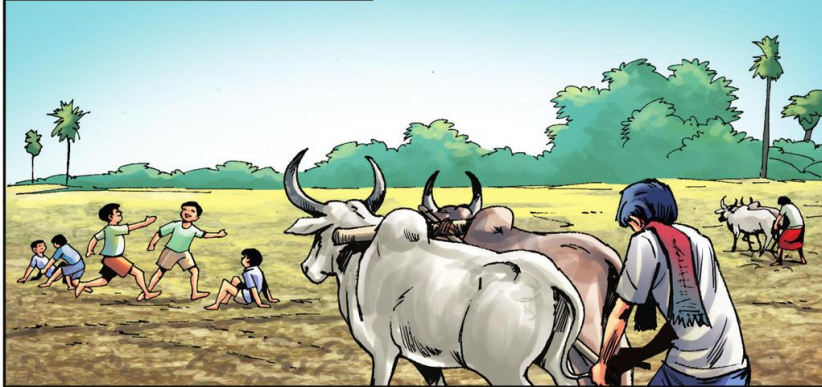


HIS BRAVE ACT HAD GONE BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY, FORCING THE ENEMY TO FALL BACK.

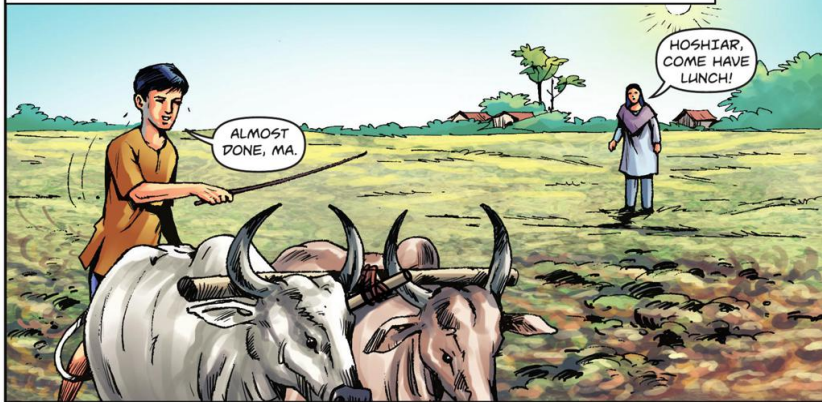


MAJOR HOSHIAR SINGH

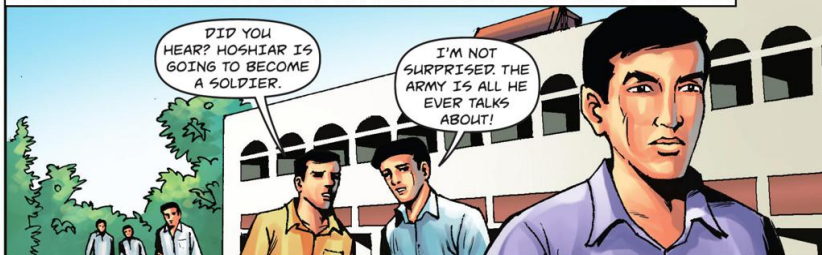
ON THE ROHTAK-SONEPAT HIGHWAY IN HARYANA LIES SISNA, A FARMING VILLAGE THAT HAS BEEN HOME TO OVER 250 SOLDIERS OF THE INDIAN ARMY.



ON 5 MAY, 1937, WAS BORN THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS OF THESE NAMES, HOSHIAR SINGH. HOSHIAR WAS A HARD-WORKING CHILD WHO GREW UP HELPING IN HIS FATHER'S FIELDS.



LIKE MANY IN HIS VILLAGE, HOSHIAR TOO ASPIRED TO JOIN THE ARMED FORCES FROM A YOUNG AGE. HE WAS RECRUITED WHEN HE WAS STILL A TEENAGER AT JAT COLLEGE IN ROHTAK.



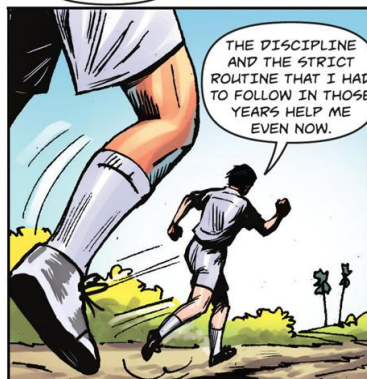
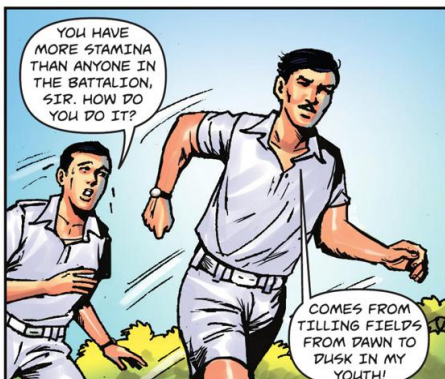
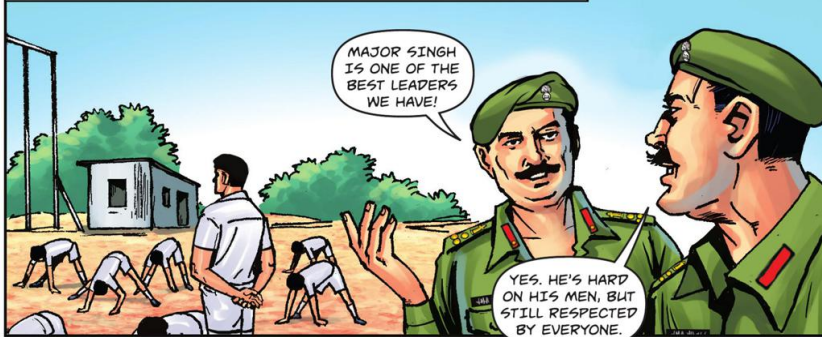
HOSHIAR WAS A NATURAL FIT AS A SOLDIER, BUT HE HAD BIGGER AMBITIONS.



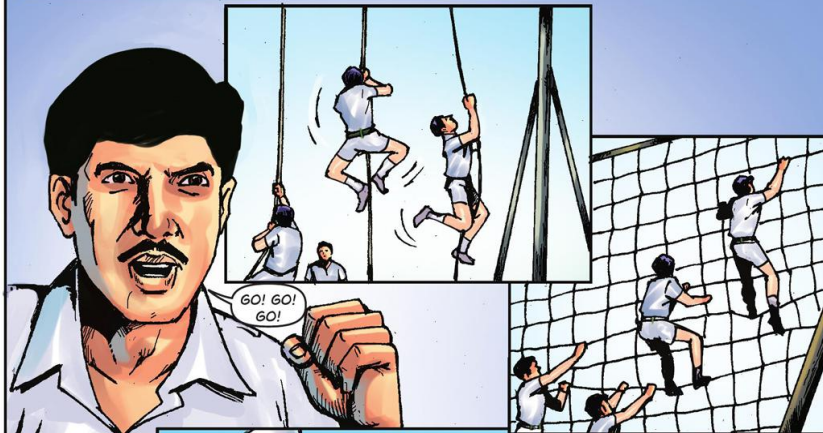
HOSHIAR CLEARED THE EXAM IN HIS FIRST ATTEMPT. ON 30 JUNE, 1963 -



HOSHIAR MOVED UP THE RANKS QUICKLY, EVENTUALLY BECOMING A MAJOR.



AS COMPANY COMMANDER, HOSHIAR SINGH KEPT HIS TROOPS HIGHLY TRAINED THROUGH RIGOROUS EXERCISE PROGRAMMES.

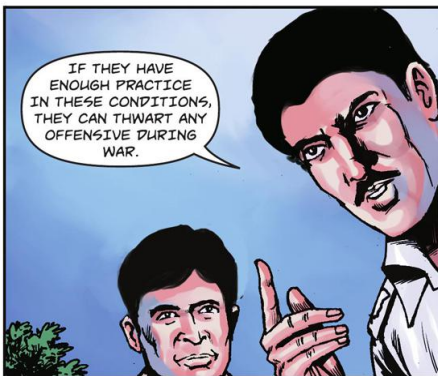


HIS METHODS WERE DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE OTHER OFFICERS'.



WHY DO YOU INSIST ON TRAINING THEM AT NIGHT, HOSHIAR?

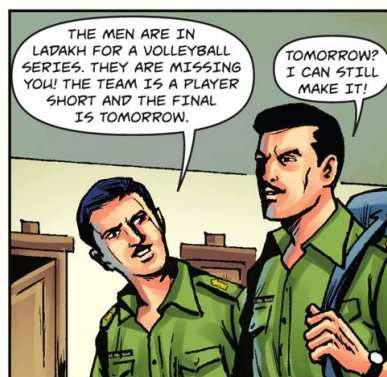
SURPRISE ATTACKS BY THE ENEMY USUALLY TAKE PLACE UNDER THE COVER OF DARKNESS.



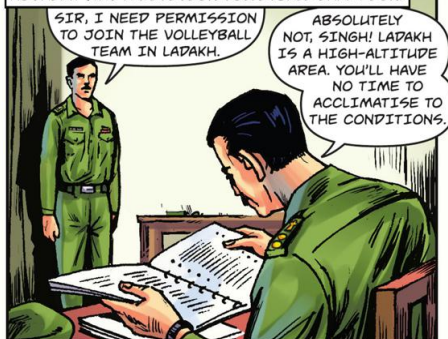
IF THEY HAVE ENOUGH PRACTICE IN THESE CONDITIONS, THEY CAN THWART ANY OFFENSIVE DURING WAR.



HOSHIAR WAS ALSO ADMIRER FOR BEING A TEAM PLAYER. ONCE, AFTER RETURNING TO HIS UNIT FROM LEAVE -



HOSHIAR WAS A DIVISION VOLLEYBALL CHAMPION.



HOSHIAR MANAGED TO CONVINCE HIS SENIOR OFFICER TO LET HIM GO. BUT WHEN HE ARRIVED IN LADAKH -



EVERY SMALL EFFORT TOOK A LOT OF ENERGY. THE THIN AIR CAUSED HIM GREAT FATIGUE.

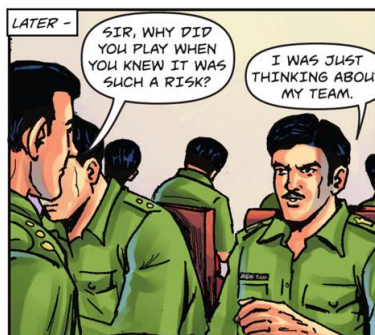
IGNORING THE CONDITIONS, HOSHIAR TOOK TO THE FIELD THE NEXT MORNING.



HOSHIAR IMPRESSED EVERYONE WITH HIS DETERMINATION. BUT HALFWAY THROUGH THE MATCH -



HOSHIAR SINGH HAD TO BE EVACUATED IMMEDIATELY.



THE YEAR 1971 BROUGHT THE TOUGHEST CHALLENGE MAJOR HOSHIAR SINGH AND HIS MEN WOULD EVER FACE. EAST PAKISTAN (BANGLADESH) DECLARED INDEPENDENCE FROM WEST PAKISTAN IN MARCH, 1971, AND THE TWO REGIONS HAD GONE TO WAR.



INDIA HAD GOT DRAWN INTO THE CONFLICT.

IN AN EFFORT TO DIVERT INDIAN TROOPS FROM HELPING EAST PAKISTAN IN THE EAST, THE WEST PAKISTANI FORCES HAD OPENED AN ATTACK ON THE WESTERN FRONT IN PUNJAB. THE COMMANDING OFFICER ADDRESSED HOSHIAR SINGH AND THE TROOPS.



WE HAVE RECEIVED INFORMATION THAT THE ENEMY IS ABOUT TO ATTACK THROUGH THE SHAKARGARH BULGE. AS YOU KNOW, THIS IS A KEY STRATEGIC AREA FOR US.

THE PAKISTANIS PLANNED TO CUT OFF NHIA WHICH WAS THE ONLY ROAD LINK BETWEEN JAMMU AND PUNJAB.



IF WE LOSE OUR GRASP HERE, JAMMU & KASHMIR WILL BE COMPLETELY CUT OFF FROM THE REST OF INDIA. RECAPTURING IT WILL COME AT A HUGE COST.



JARPAL OCCUPIED A KEY LOCATION IN SECURING CONTROL OVER THE SHAKARGARH BULGE.



ON THE NIGHT OF 15 DECEMBER, 1971, HOSHIAR SINGH LED 'C' COMPANY TO JARPAL AND WAITED TO LAUNCH AN ATTACK.



*AN AREA ACROSS AN OBSTACLE HELD BY THE ENEMY THROUGH WHICH LARGER OFFENSIVE FORCES, LIKE ARMOURD COLUMNS, ARE LAUNCHED TO EXPLOIT DEEP INTO ENEMY TERRITORY



DESPITE SUFFERING HEAVY CASUALTIES, MAJOR HOSHIAR SINGH'S 'C' COMPANY SCORED A HUGE VICTORY BY CAPTURING JARPAL FROM THE PAKISTANIS.



HOSHIAR WAS RIGHT. THE NEXT DAY, ON 16 DECEMBER, THE PAKISTANI FORCES LAUNCHED THREE ATTACKS TO TRY AND RECAPTURE THE VILLAGE.



TWO OF THE ATTACKS WERE SUPPORTED BY ARMOUR*.



*HEAVILY ARMED TANKS THAT SUPPORT INFANTRY



*"VERY GOOD!"



INSPIRED BY HIS DETERMINATION, HOSHIAR'S MEN SHATTERED THE ENEMY ATTACK. THEIR COUNTER OFFENSIVE RESULTED IN 87 ENEMY SOLDIERS DEAD INCLUDING THE PAKISTANI COMMANDING OFFICER AND THREE OTHER OFFICERS.



THE BATTLE OF BASANTAR, AS IT WOULD COME TO BE CALLED, WAS ONE OF THE MOST CRUCIAL FIGHTS DURING THE INDO-PAK WAR OF 1971.



AFTER THE WAR, MAJOR HOSHIAR SINGH WAS AWARDED THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA FOR HIS DISPLAY OF BRAVERY, DAUNTLESS COURAGE IN THE FACE OF HEAVY ODDS AND COMPLETE DISREGARD FOR HIS PERSONAL SAFETY.



HOSHIAR SINGH WAS PROMOTED TO THE RANK OF COLONEL BEFORE RETIRING FROM THE INDIAN ARMY.

NAIB SUBEDAR BANA SINGH

JUNE, 1987, SIACHEN: MORE THAN 21,153FT ABOVE SEA LEVEL. THE 80-KILOMETRE-LONG SIACHEN GLACIER IS THE NORTHERNMOST TIP OF THE KARAKORAM RANGE OF THE HIMALAYAS. UNFORGIVINGLY COLD AND SURROUNDED ONLY BY SNOW, EVEN BREATHING AND MOVING ARE A STRUGGLE HERE.





IN AN EARLIER MISSION TO CAPTURE THE POST, AN ARMY BATTALION HAD LAID DOWN ROPES TO ACCESS HIGHER ALTITUDES, BUT THE HEAVY SNOWFALL HAD COVERED THE ROPES AND THEY HAD TO BE FIXED AGAIN FOR THE OPERATION TO CONTINUE.





IT'S BROAD DAYLIGHT AND THE SNOW IS HEAVY. I WILL CHOOSE ANOTHER ROUTE FOR THE ATTACK.

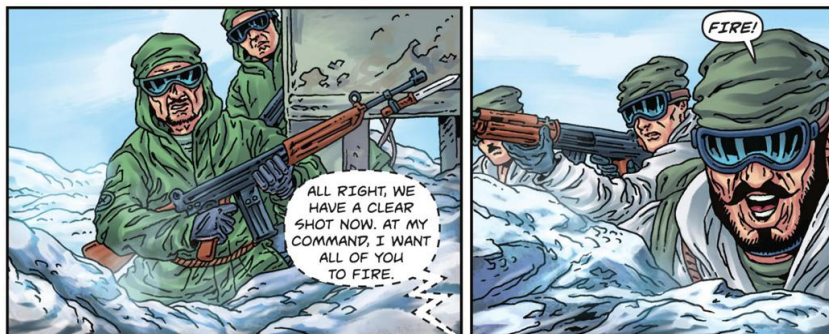
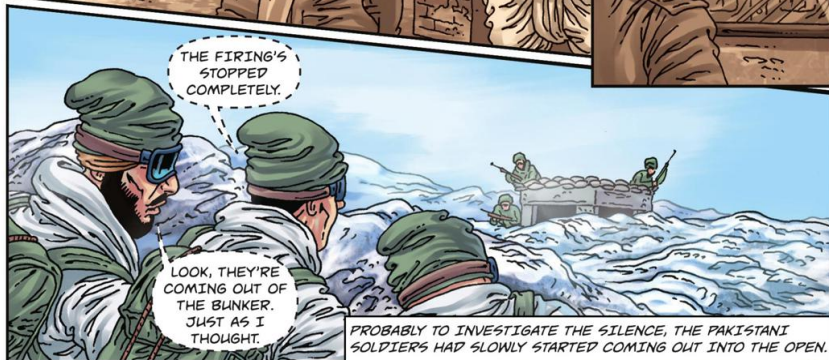
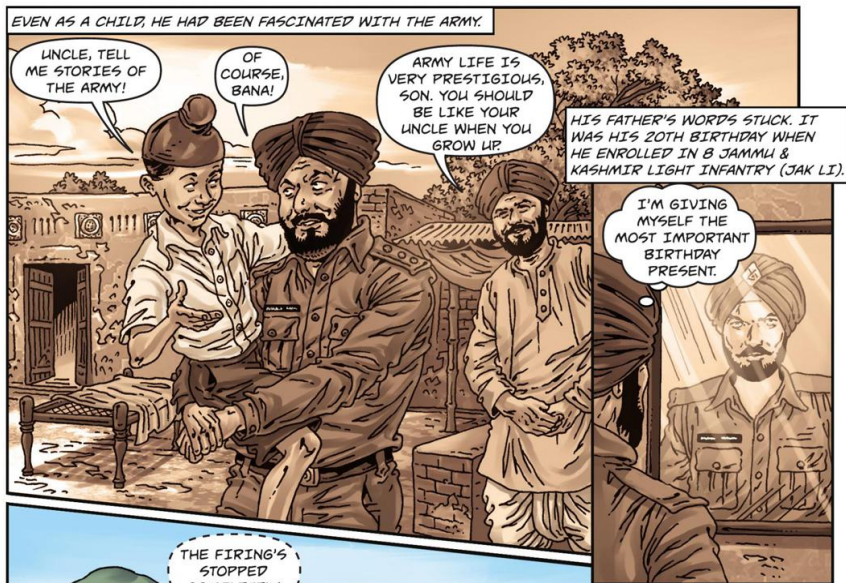




JUST THEN, THE INDIAN BATTALION STARTED GIVING THEM FIRE SUPPORT FROM BELOW. THE RETALIATION WAS SWIFT.







THE PAKISTANI SOLDIERS WERE TAKEN COMPLETELY BY SURPRISE.



AS THEY FIRED,
THE FIVE SOLDIERS
MOVED SWIFTLY
THROUGH THE SNOW
TOWARDS THE
PAKISTANI BUNKER.

DON'T
HOLD BACK!
TRUST YOUR
BAYONET!

BANA LOBBED A GRENADE IN THROUGH
THE ENTRANCE OF THE BUNKER, WHILE
THE OTHERS COVERED ALL THE EXITS.

WHAT FOLLOWED WAS A FIERCE CLOSE COMBAT FIGHT.
THE PAKISTANI SOLDIERS WERE MORE IN NUMBER...



...BUT THE INDIANS WERE
STRONGER AND WON THE DAY.

BANA SINGH RELAYED
THE HAPPY MESSAGE.



WE'VE DONE
IT, SIR! QUAID
POST IS OURS.

THE ARMY LATER DECIDED TO RENAME THE POST BANA TOP IN HIS HONOUR.



ON 26 JANUARY, 1988, BANA SINGH WAS AWARDED INDIA'S HIGHEST MILITARY HONOUR. THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, R. VENKATARAMAN, AWARDED HIM THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA.



AT THE TIME, HE WAS THE ONLY PARAM VIR CHAKRA AWARDEE WHO WAS STILL SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES. HE RETIRED AS A SUBEDAR MAJOR IN 2000, AND WAS ALSO MADE HONORARY CAPTAIN.

MAJOR RAMASWAMY PARAMESWARAN

30 JULY, 1987,
DEHRADUN

MAJOR RAMASWAMY PARAMESWARAN WAS RELAXING AT HOME WITH HIS WIFE, UMA.

THIS IS WONDERFUL TEA, UMA! COULD YOU PASS ME THE PAPER, PLEASE?

THE PRIME MINISTER HAS SIGNED A PEACE ACCORD WITH SRI LANKA. WE'RE GOING TO SEND AN INDIAN PEACEKEEPING FORCE THERE.

YES, I DID SEE THE HEADLINES.

THE SITUATION IN SRI LANKA WAS TENSE. VELLUPILLAI PRABHAKARAN HAD FORMED A MILITANT ORGANISATION CALLED THE LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM (L.T.T.E.) WITH THE AIM OF CREATING A SEPARATE STATE FOR TAMILS IN SRI LANKA.

THE L.T.T.E. AND THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT WERE ENGAGED IN A CIVIL WAR.

SRI LANKAN PRESIDENT, JUNIUS RICHARD JAYEWARDENE, HAD REQUESTED INDIA'S PRIME MINISTER, RAJIV GANDHI, TO MEDIATE.



IT SOON BECAME CLEAR THAT THE L.T.T.E. HAD NO INTENTION OF HONOURING THE INDO-SRI LANKA ACCORD. THEY TURNED HOSTILE TOWARDS THE INDIAN TROOPS THAT HAD GONE THERE TO KEEP PEACE.



THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT DECIDED THAT IT WAS TIME FOR THE ARMY TO INTERVENE. TERMED OPERATION PAWAN, THE ARMY INITIALLY SENT A BRIGADE CONSISTING OF BATTALIONS FROM DIFFERENT REGIMENTS.



AMONG THESE, WAS 8 MAHAR REGIMENT.

MAJOR PARAMESWARAN, 'PARRY' TO HIS COLLEAGUES, WAS ITCHING TO BE PART OF THE ACTION.



I HAVE
A REQUEST,
SIR.

WHAT IS
IT, PARRY?

I WISH
TO JOIN
8 MAHAR,
SIR.

PARRY'S REQUEST WAS GRANTED. ON 15 OCTOBER, 1987, HE LANDED AT THE PALAY AIRBASE IN SRI LANKA.



WELCOME
TO JAFFNA,
SIR.

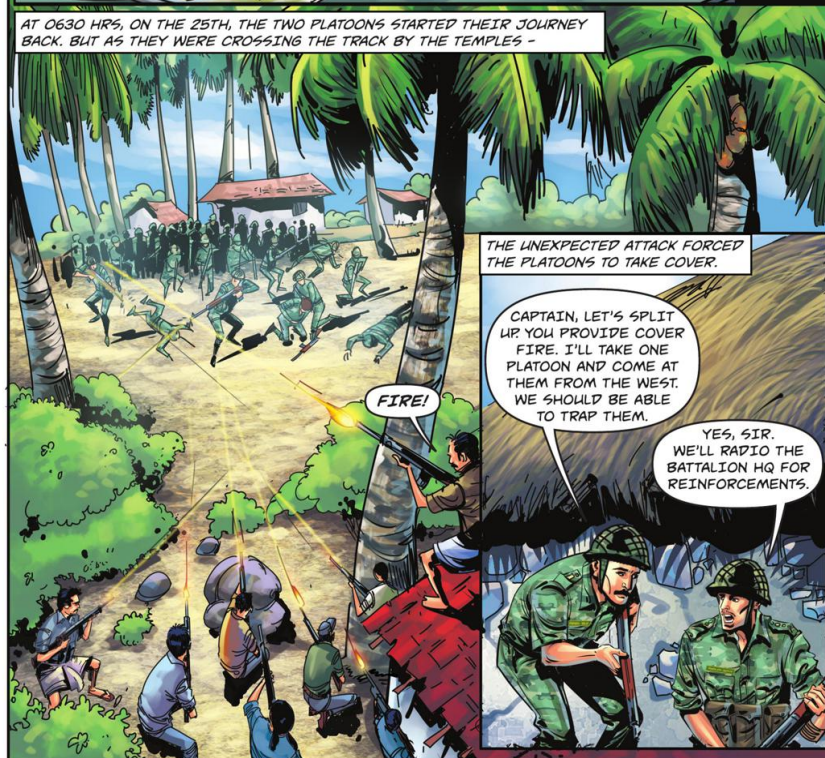






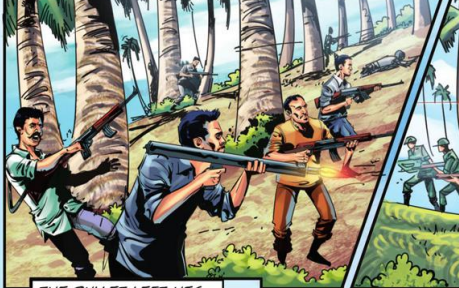


AT 0630 HRS, ON THE 25TH, THE TWO PLATOONS STARTED THEIR JOURNEY BACK. BUT AS THEY WERE CROSSING THE TRACK BY THE TEMPLES -





...BUT RETALIATED FIERCELY. THE SHEER NUMBER AND THE HEAVY FIRE THEY GENERATED BROKE THE INDIAN GROUP APART.



AS MAJOR PARAMESWARAN STEPPED INTO THE CLEARING -



AAH!

THE BULLET LEFT HIS PALM ALMOST SEVERED.



I'M FINE.
CARRY ON!

HE SPURTED TOWARDS THE NEAREST MILITANT, AND -



PARRY'S COURAGE GAVE THE MEN RENEWED FERVOUR.



FIRE!



SOON, THE MILITANTS SCATTERED AND BEGAN TO SEEK COVER.

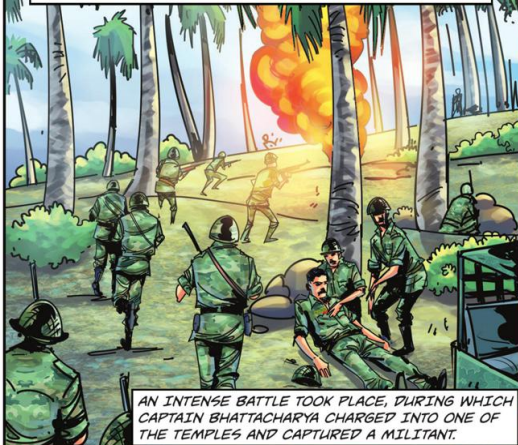


WHEN CAPTAIN SHARMA REACHED MAJOR PARAMESWARAN AN HOUR LATER, HE HAD BREATHED HIS LAST.



EVEN HIS WATCH HAS STOPPED.

SOON AFTER, HELP ARRIVED IN THE FORM OF CAPTAIN T.C. BHATTACHARYA AND HIS TWENTY-MAN REINFORCEMENT.

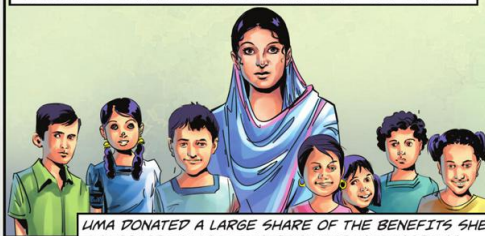


AN INTENSE BATTLE TOOK PLACE, DURING WHICH CAPTAIN BHATTACHARYA CHARGED INTO ONE OF THE TEMPLES AND CAPTURED A MILITANT.

THE BOLD MOVE PUT A SUDDEN END TO THE BATTLE. INFORMATION GATHERED FROM THE CAPTURED MILITANT ENABLED THEM TO RECOVER A HUGE AMOUNT OF EXPLOSIVES AND FIREARMS.



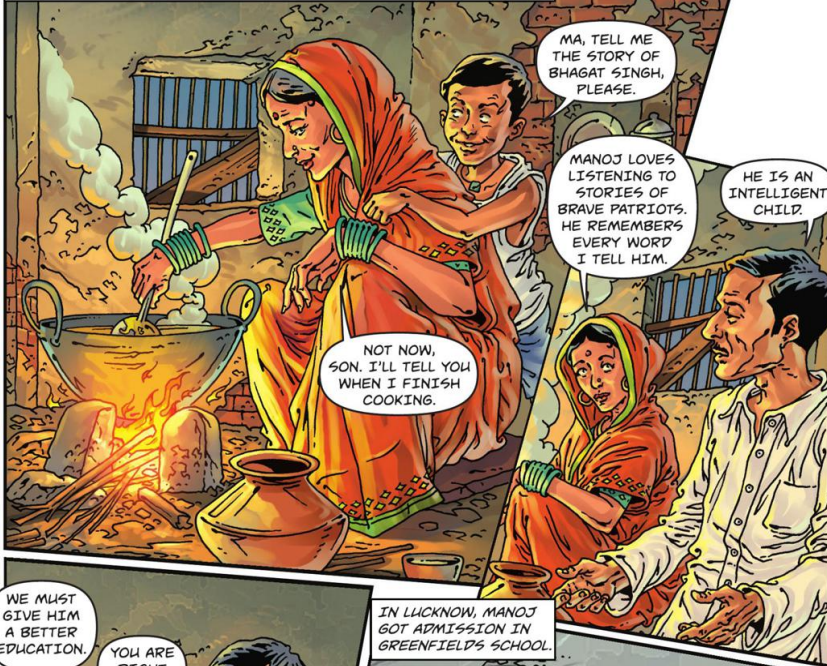
FOR HIS INSPIRING LEADERSHIP AND EXTREME COURAGE, MAJOR RAMASWAMY PARAMESWARAN WAS HONOURED POSTHUMOUSLY WITH THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA.



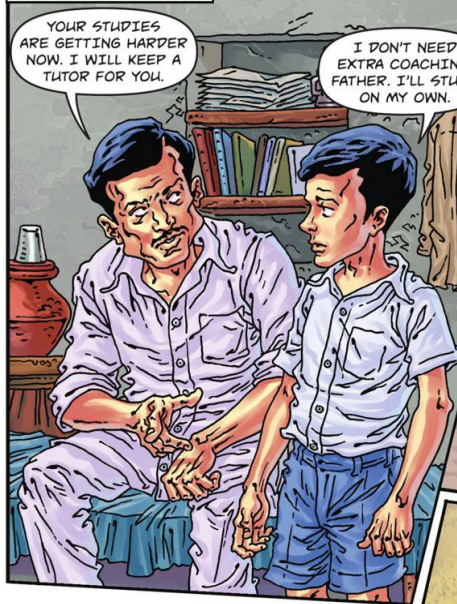
LUMA DONATED A LARGE SHARE OF THE BENEFITS SHE RECEIVED TO HELP CHILDREN AND WAR WIDOWS.

CAPTAIN MANOJ KUMAR PANDEY

1982: SEVEN-YEAR-OLD MANOJ LIVED WITH HIS PARENTS, GOPICHAND AND BRAJMOHINI PANDEY, IN ROODHA, A VILLAGE IN UTTAR PRADESH.



AS MANOJ GREW OLDER -



YOUR STUDIES ARE GETTING HARDER NOW. I WILL KEEP A TUTOR FOR YOU.

I DON'T NEED EXTRA COACHING, FATHER. I'LL STUDY ON MY OWN.

MANOJ DID WELL AT STUDIES. HE WAS ALSO KEEN ON BOXING AND BODYBUILDING.



YOUR FEET HARDLY TOUCH THE GROUND WHEN YOU SKIP HOW DO YOU SKIP SO SILENTLY AND SO FAST?

I HAVE PLENTY OF PRACTICE AT HOME...

...AT NIGHT, MY MOTHER PUTS OUT THE CLAY POTS SHE MAKES TO DRY ON THE TERRACE. I PRACTISE SKIPPING OVER THE POTS AND BACK!



ONCE HE WAS GOING ON A SCHOOL TRIP TO HARIDWAR.

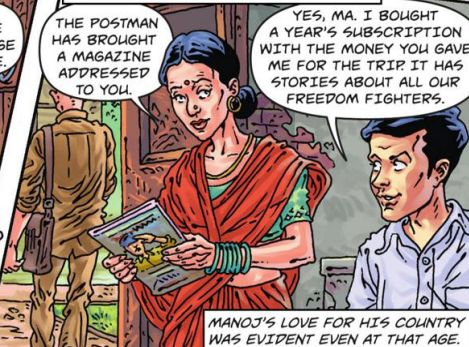


HERE. KEEP HUNDRED RUPEES WITH YOU FOR THE TRIP.

JUST GIVE ME THE CHANGE YOU HAVE.

MANOJ'S MOTHER GAVE HIM 24 RUPEES THAT SHE HAD WITH HER.

MANOJ RETURNED WITH RS 2. THE FAMILY SOON CAME TO KNOW WHAT HE HAD SPENT THE REMAINING MONEY ON.



THE POSTMAN HAS BROUGHT A MAGAZINE ADDRESSED TO YOU.

YES, MA. I BOUGHT A YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION WITH THE MONEY YOU GAVE ME FOR THE TRIP IT HAS STORIES ABOUT ALL OUR FREEDOM FIGHTERS.

MANOJ'S LOVE FOR HIS COUNTRY WAS EVIDENT EVEN AT THAT AGE.



AT N.D.A., MANOJ WAS SOON NOTICED BY SENIOR OFFICERS.

MARK MY WORDS.
THAT YOUNG MANOJ
PANDEY WILL GO
A LONG WAY.

I FIND HIM A
BIT RESERVED
AND QUIET.

MAYBE.
BUT HE HAS
NERVES OF
STEEL.

JUST THEN A SCUFFLE BROKE
OUT BETWEEN TWO CADETS.

HOI!
BREAK
IT UP!

HE HAS
SUCH A
STENTORIAN
VOICE!

HA! HA! YOU
ARE RIGHT. GOOD
VOICE FOR
A LEADER!

MANOJ PASSED OUT FROM THE N.D.A. AND
JOINED THE INDIAN MILITARY ACADEMY.
IN JUNE, 1997, HE WAS COMMISSIONED
AS AN OFFICER OF THE INDIAN ARMY.

AMMA, YOU TOLD ME
STORIES OF BRAVEHEARTS
LIKE BHAGAT SINGH
AND AZAD. OF WHAT USE IS THAT AND
ALL MY TRAINING IF I AM
GOING TO BE SCARED OF
CONFRONTING DANGER?

HE IS
RIGHT.

BUT HIS MOTHER
COULD NOT GET
OVER HER FEARS.

I HAVE JOINED
THE GORKHA RIFLES
BATTALION. WE
ARE POSTED IN
KASHMIR.

BUT THAT
IS A HOTBED
OF TERRORIST
ACTIVITY!

MANOJ, I HAVE
HEARD AN OFFICER
IS ALWAYS BEHIND
HIS TROOPS WHEN
THEY ATTACK.

AMMA, MY
JAWANS ARE LIKE
MY CHILDREN. I
WILL ALWAYS LEAD
FROM THE FRONT.





IT IS SO BITTERLY COLD IN SIACHEN THAT YOU CAN SEE YOUR BREATH FREEZE UNDER YOUR NOSE! UNCOVERED FACES TURN BLACK WITH COLD.

DO NOT HANDLE YOUR FROZEN WEAPONS WITH BARE HANDS. WEAR GLOVES OR YOUR SKIN WILL STICK TO THE GUN AND GET RIPPED OFF.



THE UNIT HAD TO TRAIN IN MOUNTAIN-CLIMBING.

THE TERRAIN HERE IS TREACHEROUS. IT IS FULL OF CREVASSES. BEFORE CLIMBING WE FORM A ROPE CHAIN BY TYING OURSELVES TO ONE ANOTHER.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A PERSON FALLS OFF, SIR?



THE OFFICER'S REPLY WAS CHILLINGLY MATTER OF FACT.

WE ATTEMPT TO PULL UP THE PERSON QUICKLY. IF WE FAIL IN OUR ATTEMPT OF 4-5 MINUTES, WE CUT THE ROPE AND MOVE ON.



EQUIPPED WITH THIS NEW-FOUND KNOWLEDGE, THE UNIT WENT ON A CLIMB. AS THEY WERE GOING UP -

HEY! LOOK AT THAT!

MANOJ PANDEY WENT ON TO CREATE A PULLEY SYSTEM FOR CLIMBING, FOR WHICH HE WAS RECOMMENDED FOR THE SHAURYA CHAKRA.



THE OFFICER-IN-CHARGE
REPRIMANDED THE UNIT.

DON'T MOVE!
THE SNOW IS
SHIFTING!

YOU CAN
TRIGGER AN AVALANCHE
WITH SUDDEN MOVEMENTS.
MOVE VERY CAREFULLY
ON THESE SLOPES.

I'LL BE GLAD TO
BE ON TERRA FIRMA*
WHEN THE MANDATORY
45-DAY POSTING
HERE IS OVER.

I HAVE
VOLUNTEERED TO
STAY ON FOR TWO
WEEKS MORE.

YOU'RE A
REAL SUCKER
FOR PUNISHMENT,
PANDEY! ALWAYS
VOLUNTEERING FOR
THE TOUGHEST
JOBS!

AFTER HIS STINT IN SIACHEN,
MANOJ JOINED HIS UNIT IN
TAMISSGAMM IN LEH, LADAKH,
FOR SOME MUCH-NEEDED REST.

THERE
GOES MANOJ,
THE PIED
PIPER OF
TAMISSGAMM!

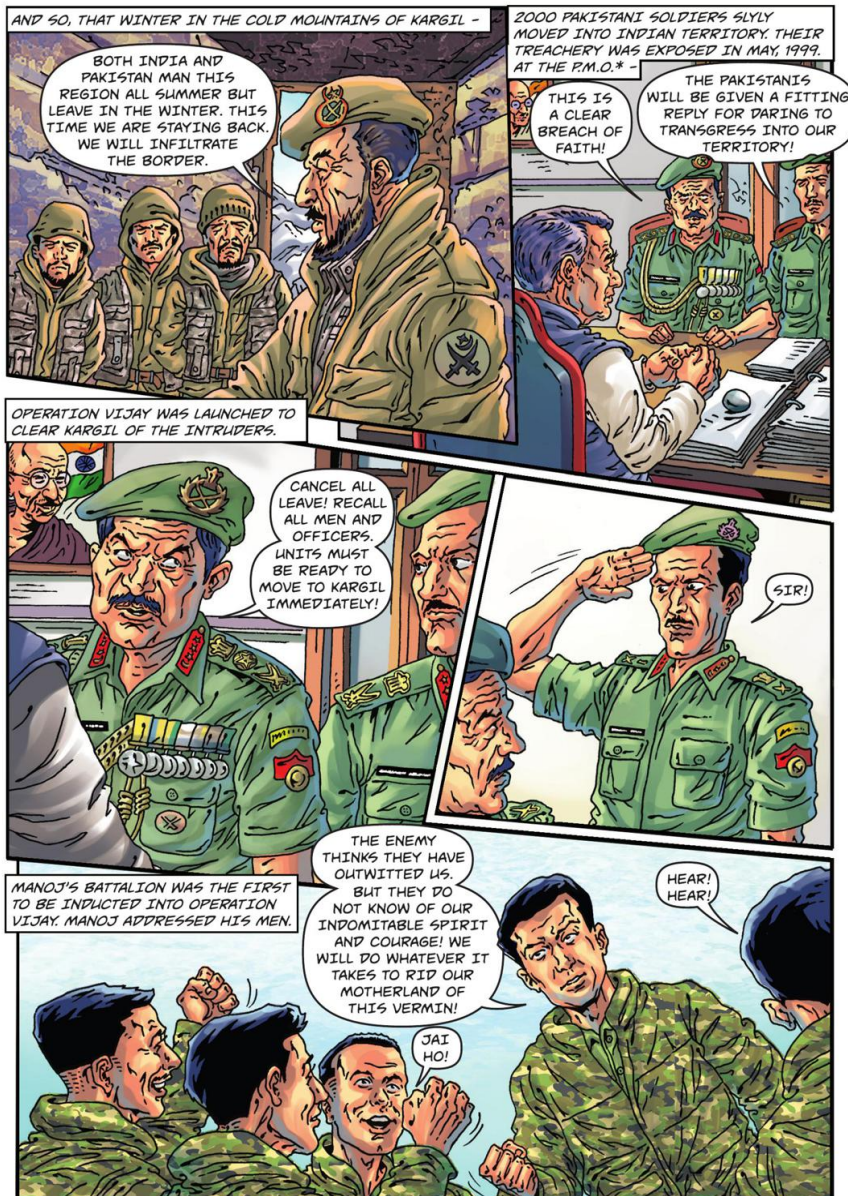
HE LOVES
PLAYING
GAMES WITH
THE LOCAL
KIDS!

THE UNIT WAS THEN ORDERED TO
MOVE TO PUNE ON A PEACE POSTING.
BUT FATE HAD SOMETHING ELSE IN
STORE. FAR AWAY IN PAKISTAN -

ALL OUR PLANS
TO WREST KASHMIR
AWAY FROM INDIA
HAVE FAILED IN
THE PAST.

BUT THIS
TIME WE WILL
SUCCEED...

*GROUND

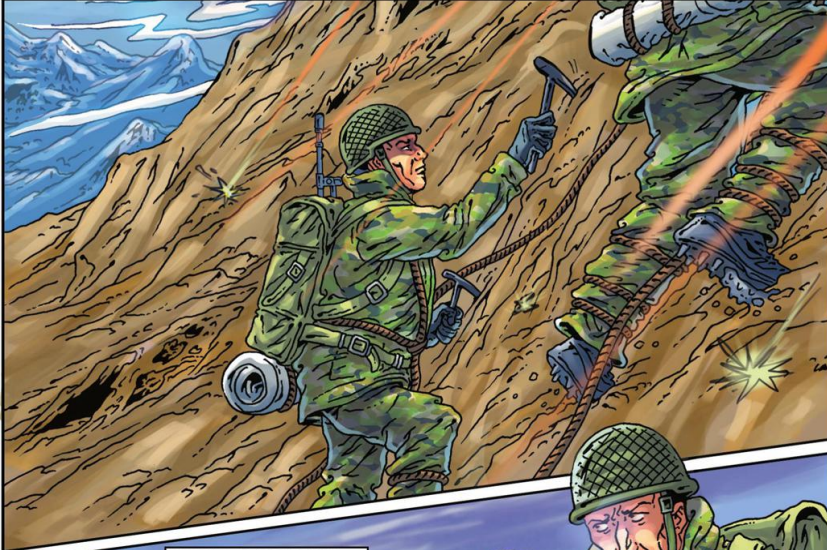


*PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE





MANOJ LED HIS MEN UP THE 80 DEGREE SLOPE. THE PLATOON INCHED UP BUFFETED BY ICY WINDS AND A CONTINUOUS BARRAGE OF ENEMY GUNFIRE. THEIR ONLY THOUGHT - CLEAR THE BUNKERS OF THE ENEMY.



WHEN THEY REACHED THE TOP MANOJ PANDEY OUTLINED HIS STRATEGY.

YOU WILL CLEAR THE BUNKERS ON THE RIGHT. I AM GOING TO DESTROY THE FOUR BUNKERS ON THE LEFT.



AT THE CRACK OF DAWN, MANOJ AND HIS PLATOON LAUNCHED A DARING ATTACK.



HIS MEN SAW HIM FALL AND CAME RUNNING. BUT HE SHOUTED TO THEM -



MAD WITH GRIEF AND ANGER AT SEEING THEIR BELOVED COMRADE DYING, CAPTAIN PANPEY'S MEN WENT ON A RAMPAGE AND DECIMATED THE ENEMY.

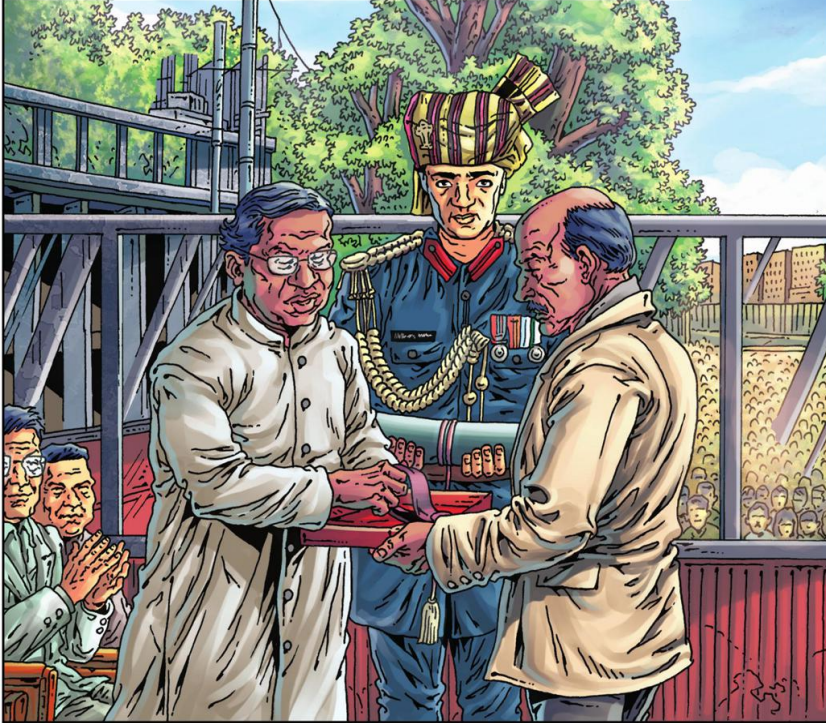
THE TEAM CAME BACK TO REPORT THAT MANY HAD BEEN KILLED IN THE ENEMY RANKS. SOME HAD RUN AWAY, LEAVING BEHIND A HUGE CACHE OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION. FROM THE INDIAN SIDE, SIX SOLDIERS HAD LOST THEIR LIVES ALONG WITH MANOJ PANPEY.

CAPTAIN MANOJ PANPEY RETURNED HOME A HERO. HIS BODY WAS FLOWN BACK TO LUCKNOW. MANY PEOPLE LINED THE FLOWER-BEDECKED ROUTE FROM HIS HOME TO THE FINAL RESTING PLACE.



*IN GORKHALI - "DON'T LEAVE THEM!"

24-YEAR-OLD MANOJ PANDEY RECEIVED THE NATION'S HIGHEST ORDER OF GALLANTRY - THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA. IT WAS THE FIRST PARAM VIR CHAKRA OF THE KARGIL WAR.



CAPTAIN MANOJ PANDEY WROTE REGULARLY IN HIS DIARY. AN EXCERPT FROM HIS DIARY -



GRENADIER YOGENDRA SINGH YADAV

THE YEAR WAS 1996. 16-YEAR-OLD YOGENDRA SINGH YADAV HAD JUST JOINED THE 18 GRENADIERS REGIMENT OF THE INDIAN ARMY.



YADAV, YOU WILL JOIN THE GHATAK PLATOON FOR TRAINING IMMEDIATELY.

YES, SIR!

ONLY THE MOST PHYSICALLY FIT AND MOTIVATED SOLDIERS WERE SELECTED TO BE A PART OF THE GHATAKS.



YOU WILL NEED TO BUILD YOUR STAMINA TO CARRY FOOD AND AMMUNITION OVER LONG DISTANCES.

GHATAK COMMANDOS WERE TRAINED IN SURVIVAL TACTICS TO ENDURE THE MOST ADVERSE CONDITIONS.

GRENADIER YOGENDRA CAME THROUGH THE TRAINING WITH AN OUTSTANDING REPORT, EXCELLING IN ALL THE TASKS ASSIGNED TO HIM.



PUT THE RIFLE TOGETHER IN 45 SECONDS!



WELL DONE, YADAV! YOU'VE FINISHED WITH TIME TO SPARE.

THREE YEARS LATER, IN 1999, YOGENDRA GOT MARRIED. HOWEVER, HIS JOY PROVED TO BE SHORT-LIVED, AS JUST A FEW DAYS AFTER THE WEDDING -



INDIA AND PAKISTAN HAD A PACT WHICH STATED THAT BOTH SIDES WOULD VACATE THE AREA DURING WINTERS TO AVOID THE HARSH WEATHER. THE ARMY POSTS HAD BEEN EMPTY AS A RESULT.



YOGENDRA VOLUNTARILY CUT SHORT HIS LEAVE AND REJOINED HIS UNIT. SOON AFTER, THERE WAS SOME DISTURBING NEWS.



YOGENDRA WAS RIGHT. ONCE THE PAKISTANI ARMY'S INVOLVEMENT WAS CONFIRMED IN MAY 1999, A FULL-SCALE WAR BROKE OUT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.



A FEW WEEKS INTO THE FIGHTING, INDIA HAD SUCCESSFULLY CLEARED MOST OF THE POSTS OCCUPIED BY THE ENEMY FORCES. ONE BASE THAT WAS YET TO BE CAPTURED WAS TIGER HILL TOP IN KARGIL.



WE HAVE ALREADY RECLAIMED THE NORTH, SOUTH AND EAST FACES OF TIGER HILL. THE GHATAK PLATOON HAS BEEN CHOSEN TO LEAD THE ATTACK ON THE WESTERN FACE.

IT WAS A 16,500-FOOT VERTICAL CLIMB TO THE TOP.

WE WILL SCALE THE MOUNTAIN AT NIGHT AND SET UP AN M.M.G. BASE AT 16,000FT, BEFORE PROCEEDING HIGHER.



YOGENDRA WENT TO LIEUTENANT BALWAN AFTER THE BRIEFING.



SLOWLY, BUT STEADILY, THE PLATOON MADE ITS WAY TO THE FIRST TARGET OF 16,000FT THROUGH THE BITING COLD.



THAT NIGHT, ON JULY 3, 1999, THE GHATAKS LAUNCHED A FINAL SURGE TOWARDS THE SUMMIT IN COMPLETE DARKNESS.



BUT KEEPING A WATCH ON THE CONDITIONS AND THE ENEMY WAS NOT EASY AND THE PLATOON WAS SPOTTED BEFORE IT COULD REACH THE BUNKERS.



ONLY SEVEN INDIAN COMMANDOS, INCLUDING YOGENDRA, MANAGED TO SCRAPE THROUGH THE FIRING. THE REST OF THE TROOPS REMAINED AT THE M.M.G. BASE BELOW.



AND THEN -



YOGENDRA HAD SUSTAINED THREE BULLET WOUNDS IN HIS LEFT HAND DURING THE EXCHANGE OF FIRE. HOWEVER -



ONCE THE FIRST ENEMY BUNKER WAS IN SIGHT, YOGENDRA KNEW HE COULD BOMB THEM.



THE GRENADE FOUND ITS MARK.



BUOYED BY THE CAPTURE OF THE FIRST POST, THE REMAINING GHATAKS PLOUGHED FORWARD, WITH YOGENDRA LAGGING A BIT BECAUSE OF HIS WOUNDS.



THERE'S ANOTHER BUNKER WHERE THOSE SHOTS ARE COMING FROM. MAKE YOUR WAY THERE!

AS YOGENDRA TRIED TO CATCH UP, HE NOTICED SOMETHING STARTLING AHEAD.



OUR MEN ARE BEING FOLLOWED!

WITHOUT WASTING A MOMENT, HE LOBBED A GRENADE AT THE PAKISTANI SOLDIERS STALKING HIS MATES.



HE HAD TAKEN OUT FOUR ENEMY SOLDIERS WITH THE BLAST, THUS HELPING SECURE A SECOND BUNKER.



THEY'RE REGROUPING AHEAD! BRACE YOURSELVES, MEN!



YOGENDRA, OUR L.M.G. HAS BEEN DAMAGED IN THE FIRING. BRING IT HERE SO WE CAN FIX IT.

YES, SIR!

DESPITE BEING WOUNDED AND HAVING NO COVER, YOGENDRA RAN TOWARDS THE L.M.G. WITHOUT HESITATION. JUST THEN -



THE BLAST CAUGHT YOGENDRA BUT DID NOT PETER HIM.



YOGENDRA, YOU'RE BADLY WOUNDED. YOU MUST BE EVACUATED!

NO! WE HAVE TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE FIRST!

REALISING THAT THEY WERE GETTING CORNERED, YOGENDRA RUSHED TO TAKE COVER IN A NEW POSITION. BUT -



THE SPLINTERS FROM THE GRENADE TORE INTO HIS LEGS. A SECOND BLAST SENT MORE TOWARDS HIS NOSE AND FACE.



I... MUST... NOT... RETREAT!

THE MAIN ENEMY BUNKER WAS JUST 50 METRES AWAY, BUT ONLY FIVE INDIAN COMMANDOS REMAINED STANDING.



THEY'RE WALKING TOWARDS US!

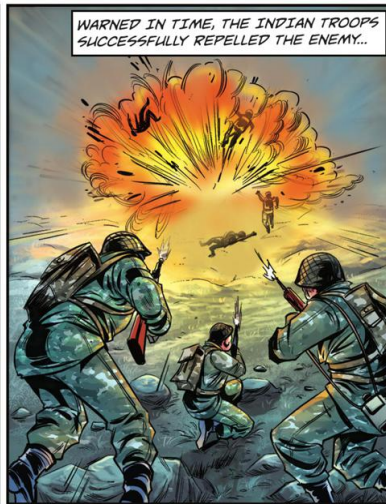
THEY MUST HAVE REALISED THAT WE'RE OUTNUMBERED.







BRIUSED, BATTERED AND INJURED WITH MULTIPLE BULLET WOUNDS, YOGENDRA WAS HELPED TO THE BUNKER BY HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS.



WARNED IN TIME, THE INDIAN TROOPS SUCCESSFULLY REPELLED THE ENEMY...

...AND THE THREE-BUNKER TIGER HILL TOP WAS RECAPTURED BY THE INDIANS.

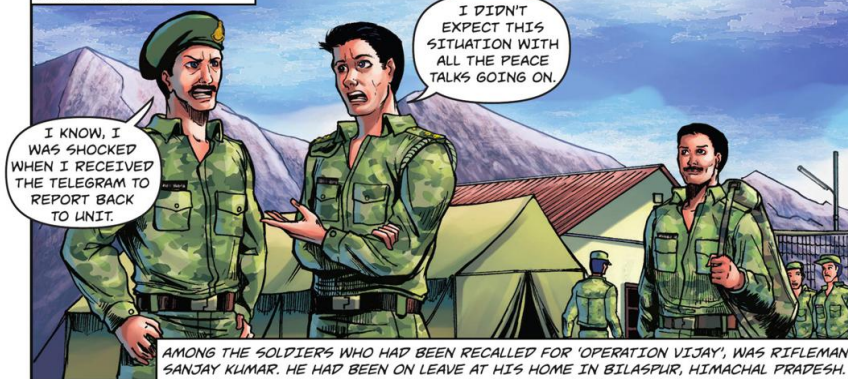


YOGENDRA SINGH YADAV WAS AWARDED THE PARAM VIR CHAKRA FOR HIS SUSTAINED DISPLAY OF BRAVERY, AT THE AGE OF 19.

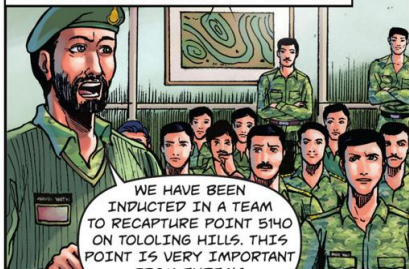
HE HAS BEEN SINCE PROMOTED TO THE RANK OF SUBEDAR.

RIFLEMAN SANJAY KUMAR

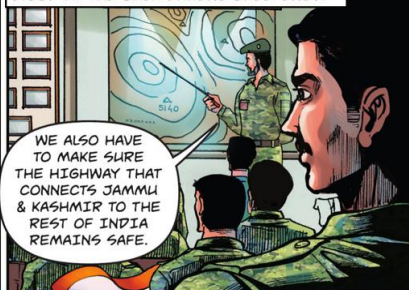
JULY, 1999
KARGIL, JAMMU & KASHMIR
OPERATION VIJAY



RIF SANJAY WAS PART OF THE 13 J&K RIFLES. THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE BATTALION ADDRESSED HIS SOLDIERS.



SANJAY WAS QUIET AND SHY, AND USUALLY STOOD AT THE BACK DURING BRIEFINGS.



SOON AFTER THE CAPTURE OF POINT 5140, THE MEN OF 13 J&K RIFLES WERE TOLD TO TAKE CONTROL OF POINT 4875. TWO PARTIES WERE TO LEAD AND THE REST WERE TO BRING UP THE REAR. DURING THE BRIEFING -



ANY QUESTIONS?

I WANT TO BE IN THE LEADING PARTY, SIR.

ON 4 JULY, 1999, THE LEADING PARTY WAS TASKED WITH CAPTURING A FLAT, ROCKY PART OF THE MOUNTAIN WHICH WOULD MAKE RECAPTURING POINT 4875 EASIER.



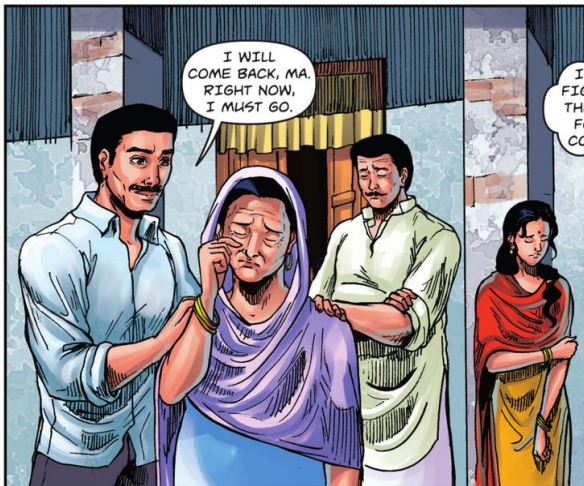
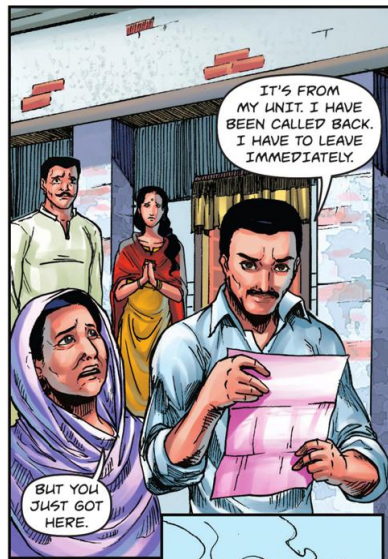
I MUST FIGHT FOR THE SAFETY OF MY LOVED ONES, FOR ALL THOSE I HAVE LEFT BEHIND IN BILASPUR.

AS THE TROOPS CLIMBED, SANJAY'S THOUGHTS DRIFTED TO THE DAY HE HAD TO LEAVE FOR THE WAR.



IT IS GREAT TO HAVE YOU BACK. WE ARE FINALLY GETTING MARRIED!

I KNOW. IT IS A WONDERFUL FEELING.





THEY WERE JUST 200 METRES AWAY FROM THE PAKISTANI SANGAR*, WHEN -



THE PAKISTANIS
ARE KILLING OUR
MEN BY THE MINUTE.
SOMETHING MUST
BE DONE.

SANJAY, WHO WAS RIGHT IN FRONT, SLID PAST
A ROCK AND CHARGED TOWARDS THE SANGAR.



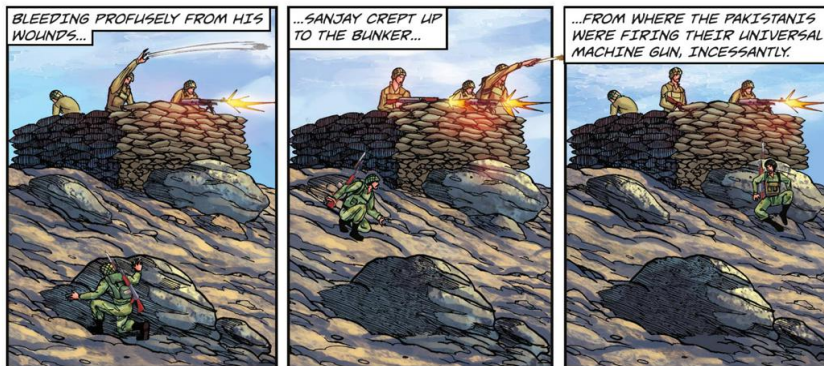
DESPITE BEING HIT, SANJAY JUMPED
INTO THE PAKISTANI BUNKER AND -



THAT'S
FOR ALL THE
SOLDIERS
WE'VE LOST!

*A MAKESHIFT BUNKER MADE
WITH ROCKS OR SANDBAGS





*BATTLE CRY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR RIFLES

RIFLEMAN SANJAY'S ACT CHARGED UP HIS COMRADES.



THE INDIAN ARMY POURED FORWARD, THWARTING ANY ENEMY FORCE THAT CAME THEIR WAY.

EVEN THOUGH SANJAY WAS BADLY INJURED AND LOSING BLOOD, HE REFUSED TO BE EVACUATED.



MEANWHILE -



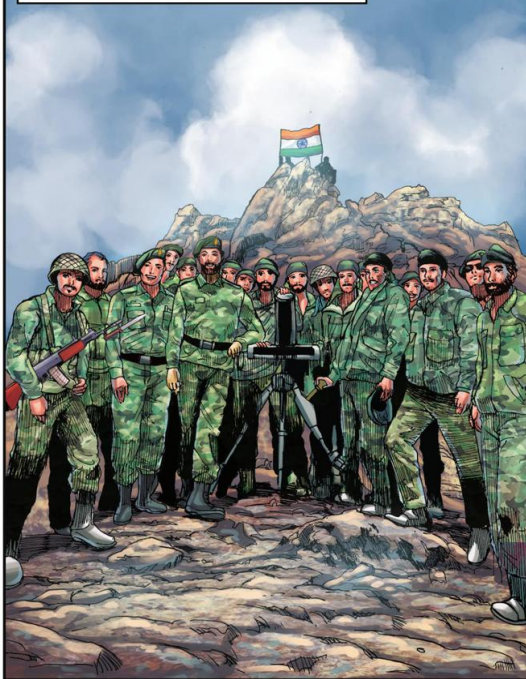
YOU ARE BADLY INJURED, WE NEED TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE.

NO! GO AHEAD. CAPTURING THE POINT IS MORE IMPORTANT. I WILL BE FINE.

THE ENEMY WAS BEATEN, AND THE FLAT TOP CAPTURED.



POINT 4875 HAD BEEN OCCUPIED. SANJAY'S ACT HAD MADE IT EASIER FOR THE INDIAN TROOPS TO MOVE FORWARD.



WHEN THE RESCUE AND MEDICAL TEAM ARRIVED AT THE SPOT -



THERE ARE VERY FEW SURVIVORS.

WE NEED TO EVACUATE ALL THE INJURED SOLDIERS FIRST.

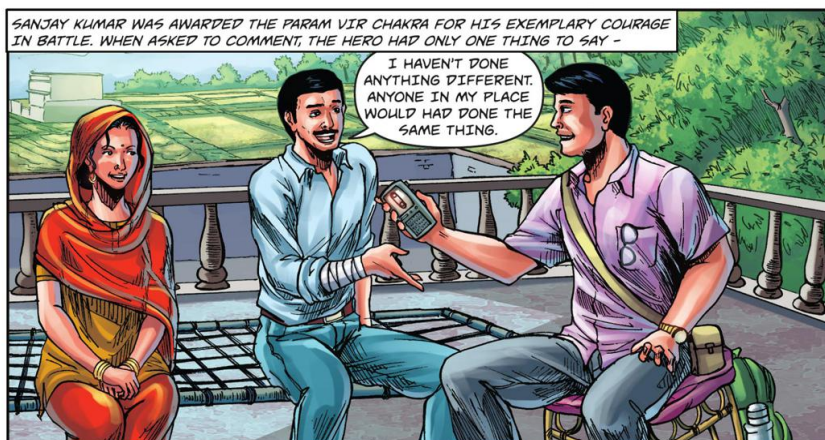


SIR! THIS MAN IS STILL BREATHING

THE SOLDIER WAS SANJAY! HE HAD LOST A LOT OF BLOOD AND WAS CRITICALLY INJURED, BUT HE WAS ALIVE!

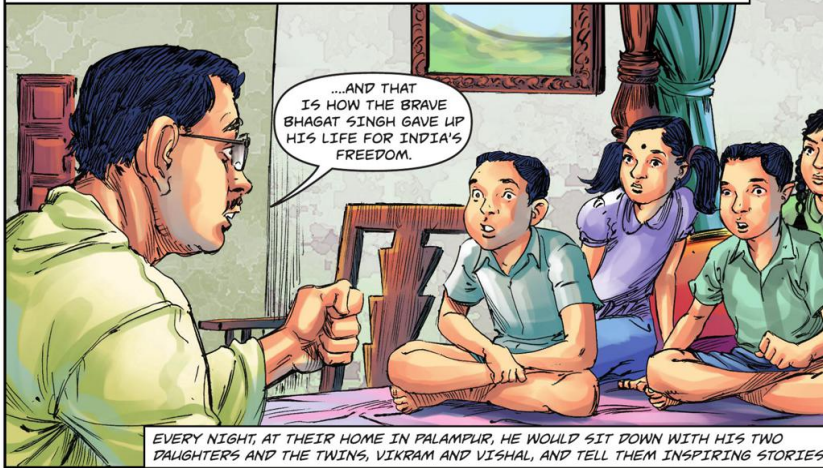


GET HIM TO THE BASE IMMEDIATELY.



CAPTAIN VIKRAM BATRA

SIRDHARI LAL BATRA WAS TELLING HIS CHILDREN THE STORY OF INDIA'S FREEDOM STRUGGLE.

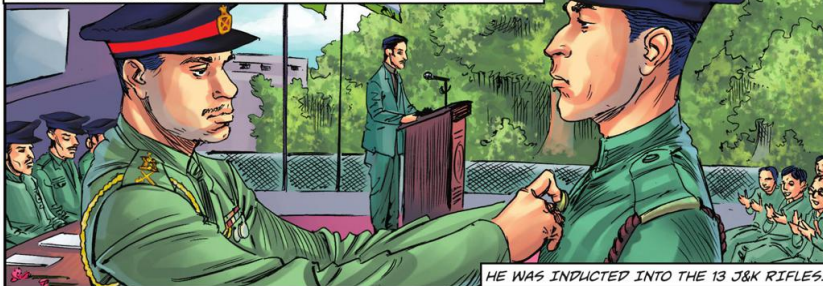


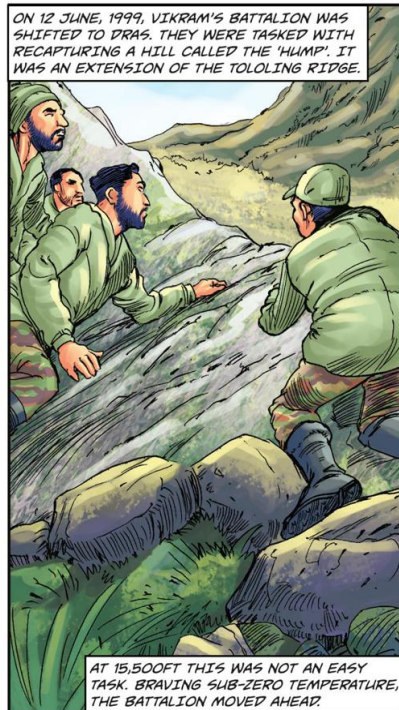
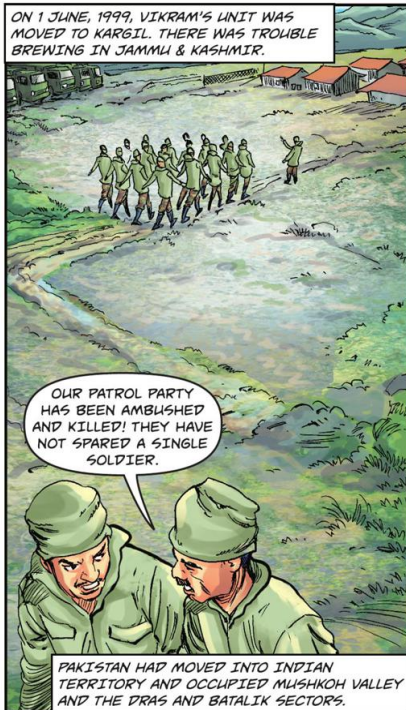
EVERY NIGHT, AT THEIR HOME IN PALAMPUR, HE WOULD SIT DOWN WITH HIS TWO DAUGHTERS AND THE TWINS, VIKRAM AND VISHAL, AND TELL THEM INSPIRING STORIES.

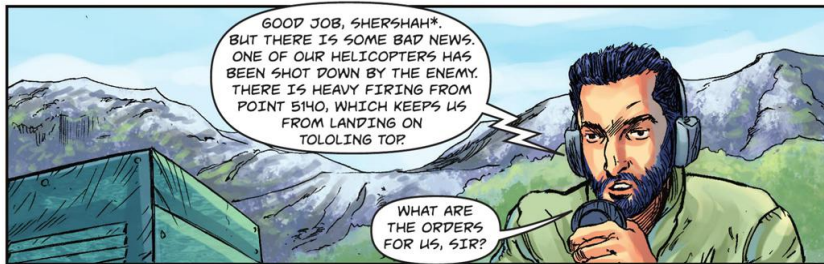
THE CHILDREN, PARTICULARLY VIKRAM, GREW UP WITH A STRONG SENSE OF PRIDE IN THEIR COUNTRY. WHEN VIKRAM GOT ACCEPTED IN THE MERCHANT NAVY -



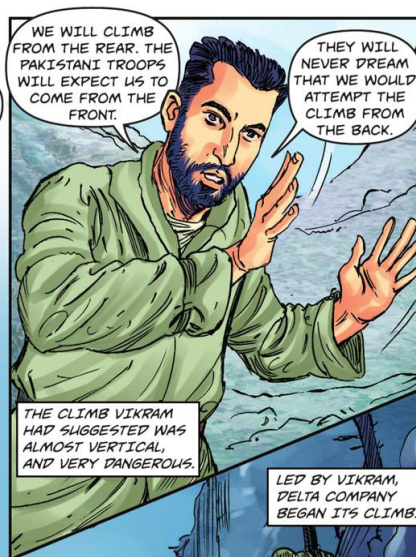
THE FAMILY AGREED OF COURSE AND IN 1997, VIKRAM BATRA PASSED OUT OF THE INDIAN MILITARY ACADEMY AS AN ARMY OFFICER.

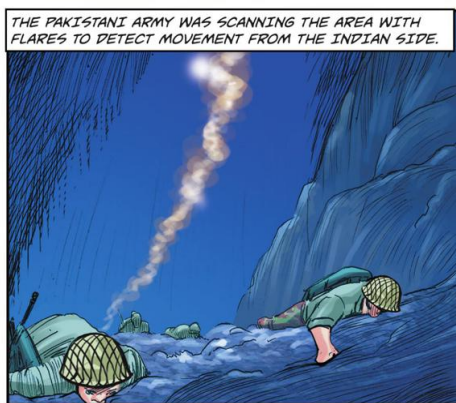




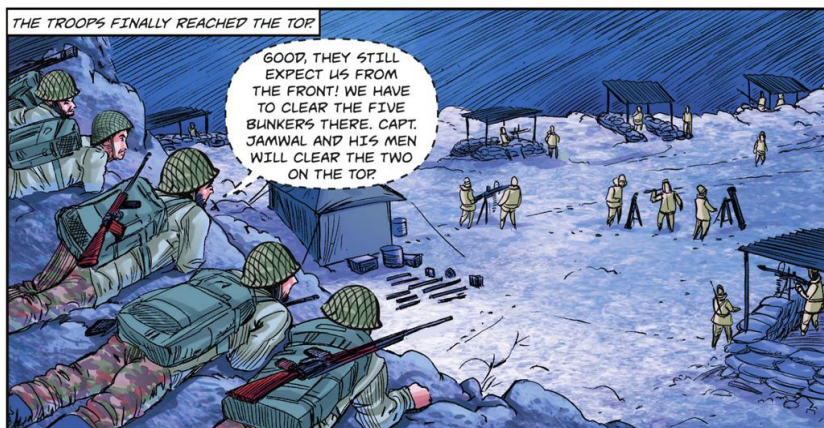


*DURING WARTIME, SOLDIERS WERE GIVEN CODE NAMES. SHERSHAH, MEANING 'LION KING', WAS VIKRAM BATRA'S CODE NAME.

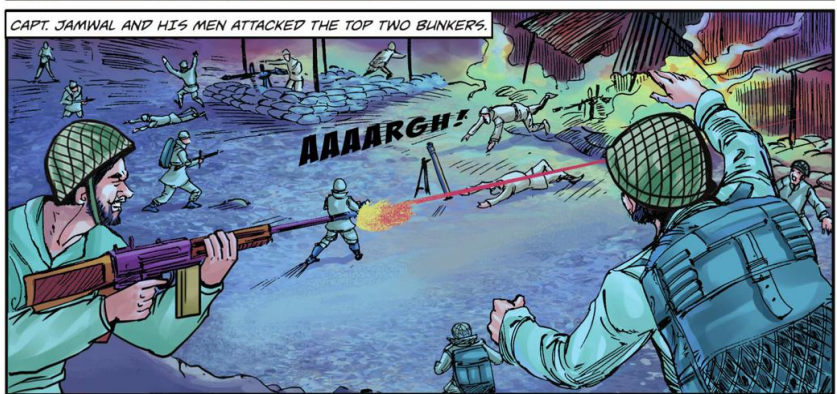


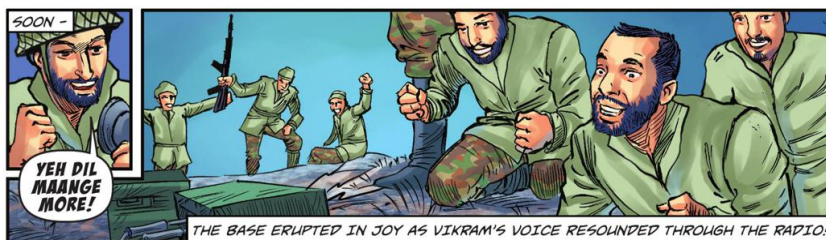
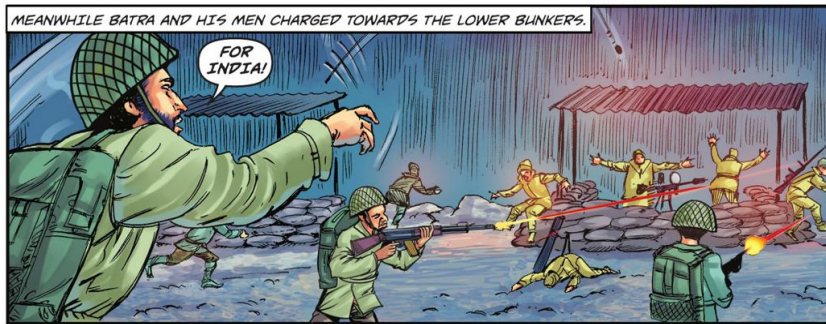


*LOW ON OXYGEN



*IT WAS NORMAL FOR THE ENEMY TO INTERCEPT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS.







ON 4 JULY, 1999, DELTA COMPANY BEGAN ANOTHER CLIMB. THOUGH VIKRAM WAS RUNNING A FEVER, HE INSISTED ON GOING WITH HIS MEN.



ON THE MORNING OF 7 JULY -



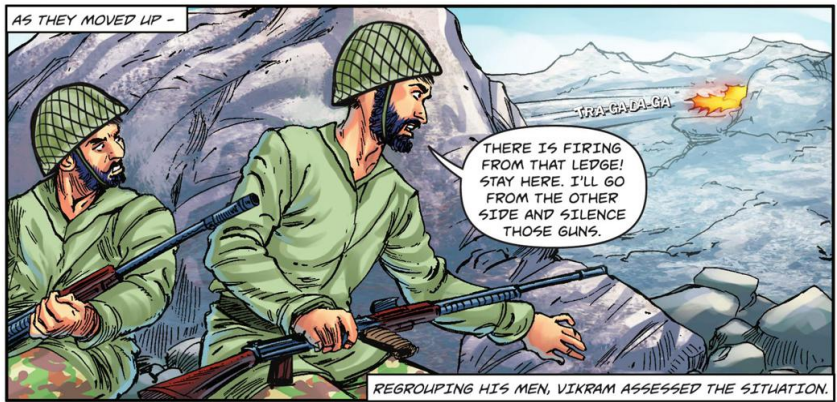


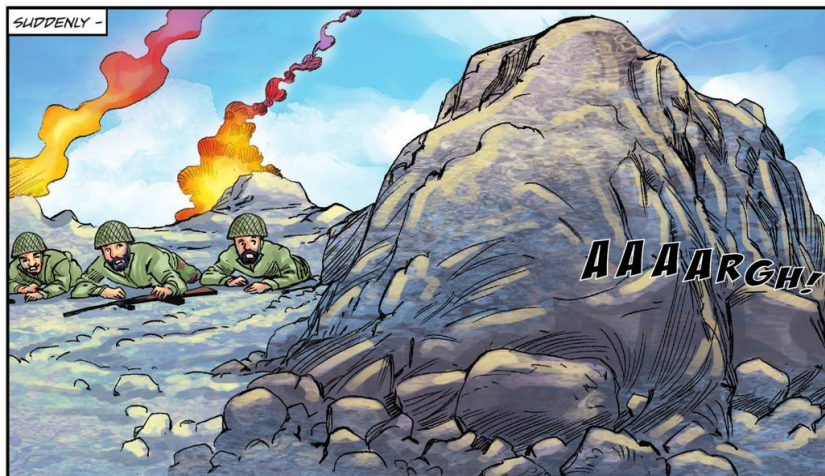
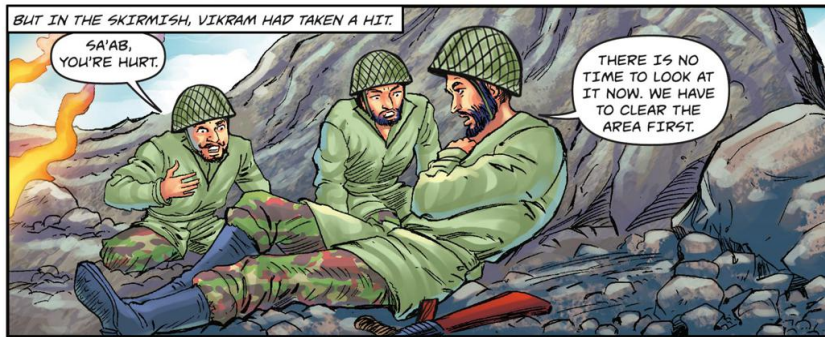
VIKRAM HAD DESTROYED THE FIRST MACHINE GUN SINGLE-HANDEDLY.

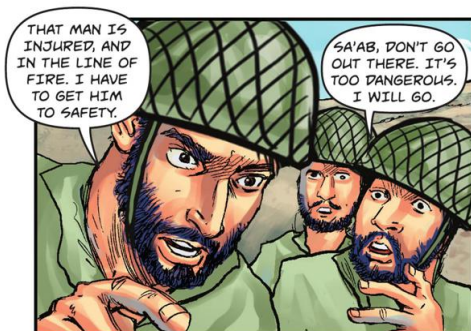


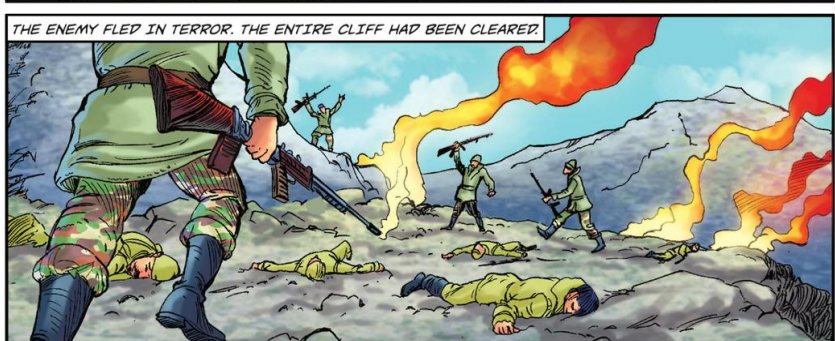
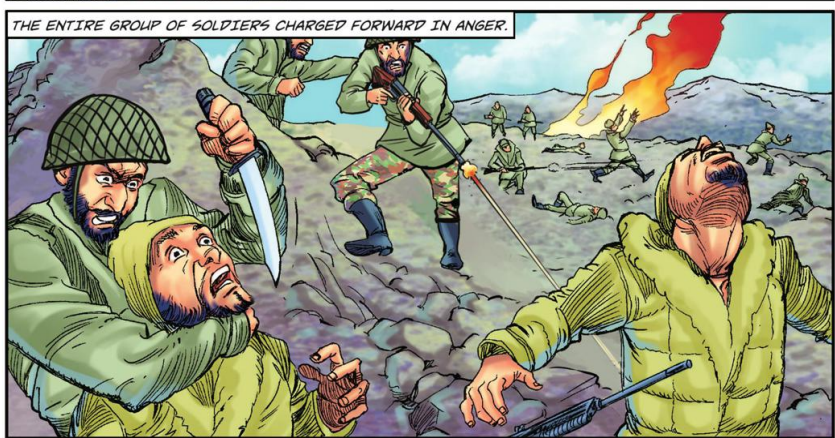
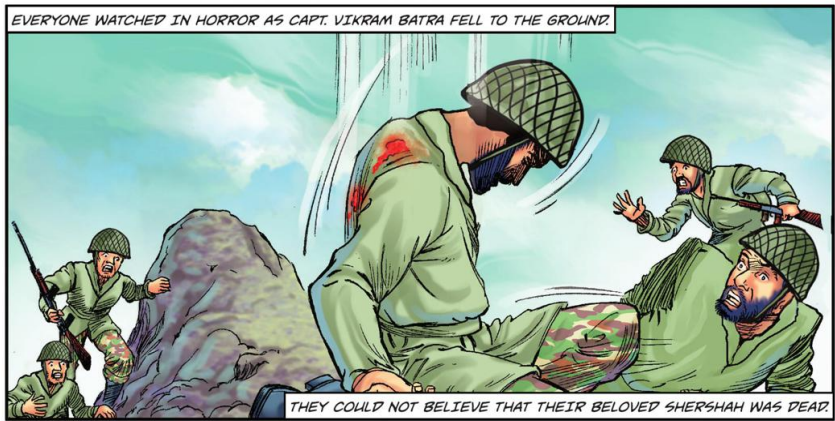
EVERY SOLDIER IN THE DELTA COMPANY CHARGED FORWARD...

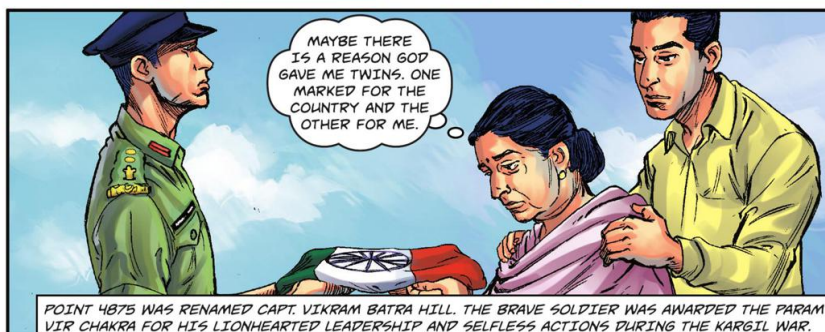
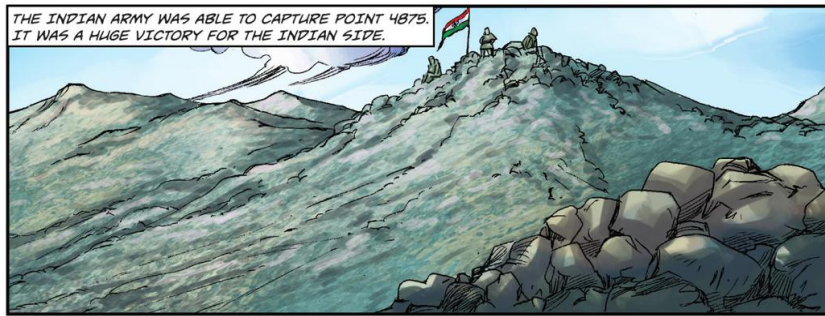
...AND DESTROYED THE FIRST TWO BUNKERS.











*AS A MARK OF RESPECT TO THE MARTYR, SOLDIERS GIVE AN ARMED SALUTE WITH THEIR RIFLES UPRIGHT, FACING FRONT. THIS IS FOLLOWED BY A 21 GUN SALUTE BY A FIRING PARTY.

Weapons and Vehicles

Gnat: The Folland Gnat was the last plane made by British aircraft designer WEW Petter. This subsonic light fighter aircraft, which was also used as a jet trainer, was characterised by its small size, angled wings and simple design. It carried a crew of one pilot, two 30mm ADEN cannons, two bombs and 18 three-inch rockets. It had a range of 800km and a maximum speed of 1120kmph at 20,000ft.



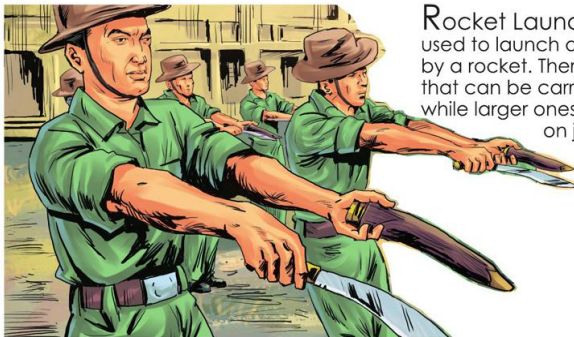
The Gnat was inducted into the Indian Air Force in 1958, and was widely used. Later, the IAF began to manufacture it under license. Eventually, the design was improved and the modifications resulted in HAL Ajeet.

Bren Guns/Light Machine Guns: Automatic handheld guns that are designed to be fired by a single soldier without assistance. They typically use smaller caliber cartridges, but have heavier barrels than rifles.

Medium Machine Guns: An automatic firearm that uses cartridges fed by an ammunition belt. They are designed to be fired from a stationary position. It is portable, but typically needs more than one person to carry.

Rifles with bayonets: Firearms that shoot bullets with great precision because of the grooves cut in the inner surface of the barrel. Bayonets are dagger-like weapons that can be attached to the muzzle of a rifle to be used in hand-to-hand combat.

Recoilless Guns: Lightweight tube artillery that, at the moment of ignition, expels a large amount of the propellant gases that creates a forward push to counter the gun's backward momentum when fired. This way, the gun can launch a powerful projectile, without getting the heavy recoil of a cannon.



Rocket Launcher: Artillery device used to launch a projectile propelled by a rocket. There are smaller ones that can be carried on the shoulder, while larger ones can be mounted on jeeps.

Khukri: A specialised knife with a curved broad blade. The khukri is the characteristic weapon of the Gorkha regiments.

Spitfires: British single-seater fighter aircraft that the Indian Air Force began using in October 1944. These are short-range and high performance aircraft that were designed, and commonly used to prevent bombers and enemy recon aircraft from completing their missions.

Anti-tank jeeps: Jeeps that come equipped with weapon systems designed to hit and destroy heavily armoured vehicles, especially tanks.

Armoured cars: Combat vehicles that are protected by strong armour and bulletproof glass, enabling them to withstand shrapnel, bullets or shells from enemy fire. These vehicles are heavily equipped with weapons, making them both offensive and defensive mobile units used to carry troops into battle.

Surface to Air missiles: Missiles launched from the ground, designed to take down aircraft

Mine detectors: A handheld device used for locating buried or concealed anti-tank mines. They typically work by identifying the presence of metal in the ground.

Centurion tanks: Developed and manufactured in Great Britain, Centurion tanks began being used in 1945. They were heavily armed main battle tanks that weighed 51,820kg. One tank could carry a crew of four, and moved at a speed of 34kmph.

Centurion tanks were used in India during the 1965 war with Pakistan. All the tanks were assigned names, by which they were referred to during the war. Second Lieutenant Arun Khetarpal's tank was a Centurion tank named Famagusta.



Second Lieutenant Arun Khetarpal's tank, Famagusta, restored and kept in display by the Indian Army

In Times of Peace

What do the Armed Forces do in peace time? Is there a role for them when there is no war?

The primary role of the Armed Forces is to defend the nation against external aggression. Success in war comes to those who are well equipped and trained. The Armed Forces, therefore, constantly train themselves so that they are better prepared than the adversary for any eventuality.

India has very long borders which mostly do not follow geographic features. Most of our borders are active and conflict prone due to difference in perception with our neighbours. In order to guard these active borders, especially in mountainous and inhospitable terrain, the Army remains deployed to thwart recurring encroachment attempts and to battle relentless ceasefire violations. The Air Force and the Navy remain in a state of readiness to respond to any impending air or sea threats to our country.

Armed Forces units and formations, stationed in peace locations, follow a rigorous training routine which include physical and weapon training, arms/equipment repair and maintenance tasks, in order to remain operationally ready. Regular two-sided exercises and war games in which various defensive and offensive scenarios are enacted, are undertaken to validate and update operational plans and battle procedures. Logistic planning and preparation for operations and contingencies are also undertaken.

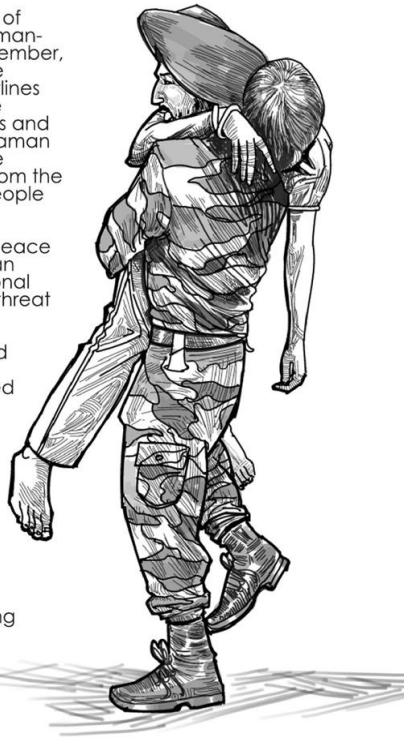
The Armed Forces are called upon to assist in times of internal disorders and calamities both natural and man-made such as floods, earthquakes etc. On 26 December, 2004, when a devastating tsunami swept across the Indian Ocean submerging islands, destroying coastlines and taking thousands of lives, the Air Force and the Navy swung into action carrying out rescue missions and transporting medical and food supplies to the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. More recently the floods in Jammu & Kashmir saw men from the Armed Forces deployed in rescuing hundreds of people from the fury of the rising water.

The Armed Forces are also called upon to restore peace and order during internal strife and unrest. The Indian Navy by patrolling the waters, guards the international shipping corridors in the Indian Ocean against the threat of piracy and terrorism.

Apart from securing the nation against external and internal threats, the Indian Army has been involved in nation building initiatives too through multifaceted activities such as laying bridges, providing medical facilities, running educational and vocational training, etc., for common people especially in inaccessible areas of J&K and the north-eastern states.

When mandated, the Armed Forces also participate in conflict prevention in neighbouring countries as during Operation Pawan in Sri Lanka (1987) and Operation Cactus in the Maldives (1988).

The Armed Forces also participate in peace-keeping missions of the United Nations under the UN Flag.



PVC Awardees



Major Samnath Sharma
1922-1947
Indo-Pak War (1947-48)



Lance Naik Karam Singh
1915-1993
Indo-Pak War (1947-48)



Second Lieutenant Rama Raghoba Rane
1918-1994
Indo-Pak War (1947-48)



Naik Yadunath Singh
1916-1948
Indo-Pak War (1947-48)



Company Havildar Major Fnu Singh Shekhawati
1918-1948
Indo-Pak War (1947-48)



Captain Gurbachan Singh Salaria
1935-1961
Congo Crisis (1962-65)



Major Dhan Singh Thapa
1928-2005
Sino-Indian War (1962)



Subedar Joginder Singh
1921-1962
Sino-Indian War (1962)



Major Shailan Singh
1924-1962
Sino-Indian War (1962)



Company Quarter Master Havildar Abdul Hamid
1933-1965
Indo-Pak War (1965)



Lieutenant-Colonel Ardeshtir Burzorji Tarapore
1923-1965
Indo-Pak War (1965)



Lance Naik Albert Ekka
1942-1971
Bangladesh Liberation War (1971)



Flying Officer Nirmaljit Singh Sekhon
1943-1971
Bangladesh Liberation War (1971)



Second Lieutenant Arun Khelarpai
1950-1971
Bangladesh Liberation War (1971)



Major Hoshiar Singh
1937-1978
Bangladesh Liberation War (1971)



Naib Subedar Bana Singh
Born 1949
Siachen Conflict



Major Ramaswamy Parameswaran
1946-1987
Operation Pawan (1987)



Captain Manoj Kumar Pandey
1975-1999
Kargil War (1999)



Grenadier Yogendra Singh Yadav
Born 1980
Kargil War (1999)



Rifleman Sanjay Kumar
Born 1976
Kargil War (1999)



Captain Vikram Batra
1974-1999
Kargil War (1999)

WHICH OF THE ACKs HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

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